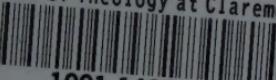


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PORTRAIT BY JOHN MICHAEL WILLIAMS

The picture by John Michael Williams, which hangs in Didsbury College, England, was painted in 1743, when Wesley was 40 years old. It was the year of the first Methodist Conference. The engraving was made by John Faber Jr. in 1748 for H. Overton, a London dealer.



John Wesley M.A.

Fellow of Lincoln College Oxford

PORTRAIT BY JOHN MICHAEL WILLIAMS OF JOHN WESLEY AT
THE AGE OF FORTY

JOHN WESLEY

A PORTRAIT

BX
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By

ABRAM LIPSKY

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PREFACE

Wesley's life was a striking example of the impact of one personality upon many. From his Oxford days down to the last day of his life Wesley was engaged in impressing himself upon his contemporaries. The Methodist Church, which has become the leading church of Protestantism, is only one of his creations. A secondary religious wave known as the "evangelical revival" was set up in the Anglican Church. "As we know her to-day," wrote Edmond Scherer in the *Revue des deux mondes*, "with her prudish and serious literature, with her Biblical language, with her national piety, with her middle classes whose exemplary morality constitutes the strength of the country, England is the work of Methodism." Methodism, besides affecting the religious practices, the speech habits and manners of English-speaking peoples, gave a tone to English labor organizations which has not yet passed. It motivated the reform of prison administration, the abolition of the slave trade and the purification of polities. The course of social, political and religious change, however, is beyond the intent or control of any individual initiator, and our primary concern is with John Wesley personally. What did he do to sway the minds of men; what were his methods?

A complete narrative of Wesley's life therefore has not been attempted in this book. Such a chronicle is provided in the three-volume biography by the Rev. Luke Tyerman, which goes over Wesley's career year by year as thoroughly and inclusively as it was possible for a biography in 1878 to do. Tyerman, a Methodist clergyman, had earnest views upon every religious and moral issue that arose in the course of his narrative, and he felt obliged to expound them at length. His book is a mine from which the reader with patience may extract much ore. The well-known "Life" by Robert Southey possesses great literary charm, although bearing unmistakable evidence of having been written in a prepsychological age.

Since the last of the innumerable sketches of Wesley pretending to the dimensions of a biography was published (Winchester's in 1910) there has appeared the remarkable document known as Wesley's "American Diary," deciphered by Rev. Nehemiah Curnock and included with facsimiles of some of its pages in his huge eight-volume edition of Wesley's *Journal*. This document enables one to form a pretty accurate judgment of the effect of Georgia upon Wesley's subsequent career. It hardly would be an exaggeration to say that Methodism had its birth in the broken romance with Sophia Hopkey which is there described by Wesley himself with a pathos which would do credit to a novelist of the highest rank. All of Wesley's biographers have hitherto referred to this

affair gingerly and inaccurately, often with absurdly infantile interpretations. There is, for example, the story that Wesley gave up Sophia Hopkey upon the decision of a conclave of Moravian elders called at Wesley's request to advise him what to do; that he never was really in love with Sophia, and that she tried disingenuously to trap him into marriage. The same treatment has been accorded the exciting comedy in which Mrs. Hawkins figured. Similarly the account which has been lying in the British Museum, endorsed in Wesley's own handwriting, telling the story of his engagement to Grace Murray and how she was snatched away from him through the blundering zeal of his brother Charles, has been haughtily neglected by all but one or two special researchers.

Wesley's was a life of action and adventure. He often risked his life, he sailed the Atlantic in small boats, rode thousands of miles on horseback and endured hardship and exposure that very few would voluntarily incur in any cause. It was a life of romance too. He was often in love, yet remained a saint. Unhappily married, he came through with unimpaired dignity and honor. It was not a droning preacher's life but the life of a statesman, an orator, a genial, vivacious lover of humanity, a tireless worker with unflagging ambition to carry on the work to which he had set his mind.

The biographies of religious heroes are usually vitiated by the assumption that these men were engaged

in wrestling with theological problems in the abstract. We are asked to believe that when a pious thinker has arrived after vast intellectual labor at the conclusion, say, that men are saved by works, another thinker arises who by still more arduous study comes to the conclusion that men are saved by faith. Whereupon there is a debate royal between the two seers or their disciples. And so we have been invited to assume that Wesley's religious thinking went on in a separate compartment of his mind in which the names of Betty Kirkham, Sophia Hopkey, Mrs. Hawkins, Grace Murray, Mrs. Vazeille and Sarah Ryan were never heard. His various protestations of sin and want of true faith, especially upon his return from Georgia, have not been taken in their obvious meaning but as if they related to events in a disembodied spiritual universe. But men hardly express themselves as Wesley did when they mean abstract sin and problems in speculative theology.

Wesley's great distinction lies precisely in this—that he interpreted life itself in terms of religion. Religion to him was a real psychological process. This accounts for his frequently breaking through the time-worn definitions and formulas of the church. He was impatient with words. He was hungry for facts, and those who heard him knew that they were listening to a true account of a genuine man's adventures of the spirit. That in large part was the secret of his influence. It goes far to explain his marvellous success

as a persuader of men. It is with this success and with the emotional conflicts which attuned him to his work that we are particularly concerned in the present volume.

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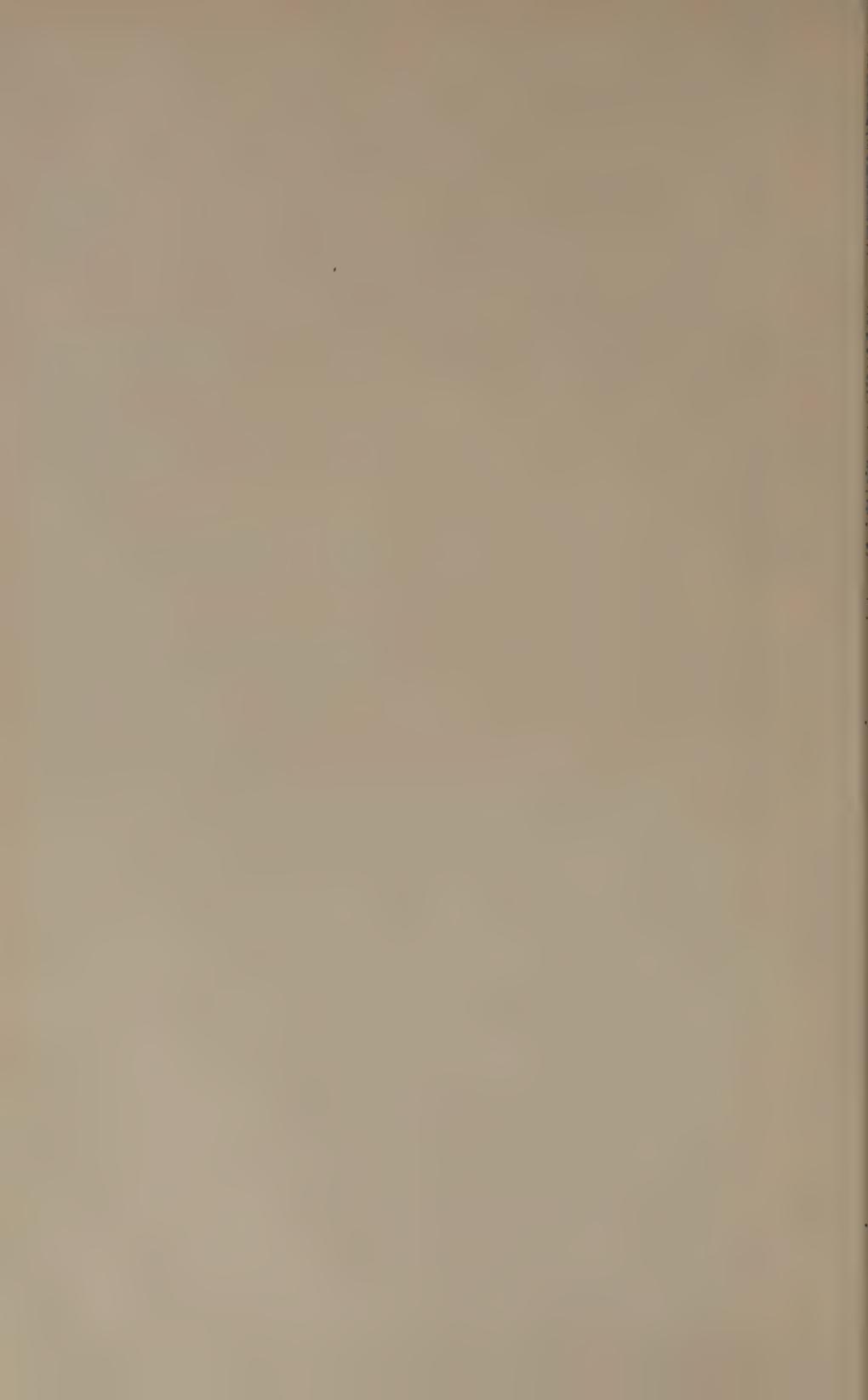
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WESLEY'S ACCOMPLISHMENT

WESLEY's life almost spanned the eighteenth century —from 1703 to 1791. His physical activity alone has hardly ever been equalled. He travelled two hundred and twenty-five thousand miles during the fifty years of his itinerant preaching, mostly on horseback, and delivered forty thousand sermons. He preached his last sermon a week before he died at the age of eighty-eight.

Wesley's genius for government, says Macaulay, was not inferior to that of Richelieu. He left an organization of eighty thousand Methodists in England. The Methodists of the world now number about thirty million. In the United States they constitute the largest of the Protestant denominations.

Besides launching Methodism, Wesley revitalized the established church of England. Christianity was moribund, according to the testimony of both friend and foe. Bishop Butler wrote: "It has now come to be taken for granted by many persons that Christianity is at length discovered to be fictitious." If anybody discussed religion in England, Montesquieu wrote home, he was laughed at. Religion was valued as a means for keeping the lower classes in order, and every class-conscious gentleman was expected to ob-

serve strictly his duties as a member of the church. In private circles the correct tone was one of witty cynicism. Bolingbroke and Walpole boasted to their friends of their free-thinking. Publicly they were very careful to exhibit their allegiance to the church.

The prevailing scepticism was in part due to the excesses of the Puritans who had tried to make men good by legislation. "Fifty years of the Restoration had not been able to make the people forget the reign of the saints." The memory of the Puritan régime filled thinking men with greater horror than did the orgies of the Restoration.

Scepticism was the result also of the flood of scientific discovery. The English people especially were thrilled by Newton's discoveries. The English clergy did their best to prove the harmony between science and religion. Religion, they insisted, must be rational. They did not preach Christianity but moralism; that is, decency, respectability, temperance, charity. Voltaire wrote home from England: "A sermon in France is a long declamation scrupulously divided into three parts and delivered with enthusiasm. In England a sermon is a solid, but sometimes dry, dissertation which a man reads to the people without gesture and without any particular exaltation of voice." The two texts most often preached upon were "Be not righteous over much" and "Let your moderation be known unto all men." A hatred of "enthusiasm" had arisen.

Mankind was supposed to be through with mystical religion. The age of reason had arrived. Ethical culture was triumphant. All this was highly satisfactory to the ladies and gentlemen who went to church. The poor stayed away.

Wesley broke up this deathly decorum and made religion in England mystical and emotional again. The Church of England gasped and awoke to new life. Just as Luther had aroused a reformation within the Catholic Church, so Wesley stung the established Church of England into a revival parallel to Methodism. The current of thought was shunted back to belief.

The visible and tangible effect of the religious revival, aside from the increase in places of worship, was a great change in the manners and morals of the English people. A comparison of conduct and speech habits among the common people of England in the early part of the eighteenth century with the style of behavior known as "Victorian" shows how great was the transformation.

The lower classes of England in the early part of the eighteenth century had a European reputation for brutality. This appeared most strikingly in their sports: Prize-fighting, bull-baiting, bear-baiting, cock-fighting and cock-throwing were the popular amusements. In the last-mentioned sport the participant threw sticks at a cock tied to a stake until it was battered to death. "It will be said," wrote Steele,

"that these are the amusements of the common people. It is true, but they are the amusements of no other common people." An advertisement appeared in London in 1727 promising "a mad bull to be dressed up with fireworks and turned loose in the game-place; a dog to be dressed up with fireworks over him; a bear to be let loose at the same time; and a cat to be tied to the bull's tail; a mad bull to be dressed up with fireworks to be baited."

This sort of thing became impossible to a people which had been moved by the spirit of John Wesley, who gave his preachers explicit directions to make their horses comfortable and carefully explained to them how a horse travelling under a slack rein was never known to stumble like one with the bit drawn back in its mouth.

An epidemic of drunkenness, brought on by the lowered cost of gin, raged among the poorer classes when Wesley began preaching. Half the wheat produced in England was consumed in distilling gin, "that bane of health, that destroyer of strength, of life and of virtue." Every sixth house was a grog-shop, and signs offering to make one drunk for a penny, dead drunk for two, with straw bedding on which to sleep it off thrown in gratis, were common. In 1727 the people in England drank three and one half million gallons of gin; in 1735 nearly five and one half millions; in 1742 seven million, one hundred and sixty-two gallons.

The moralists—and it was an age of moralists—were powerless to check the prevailing brutality, drunkenness and licentiousness. Wesley and Methodism did it. He made his preachers set the example. A “dram-drinker” could find no place in Wesley’s organization. One of the directions given to the Methodist band societies was “to taste no spirituous liquor, no dram of any kind, unless prescribed by a physician.”

Wesley’s objection to dram-drinking was no fanatical horror of alcoholic beverages. He drank wine and rum when he needed them. He took the position of Paul: “All things are lawful unto me: . . . but I will not be brought under the power of any.” Wesley’s attack upon the sellers of liquor was peculiarly savage. The Wesleys had had intimate experience in the families of their married sisters with the ruin wrought by rum. We should not sell or derive profit from anything that tends to impair health, John Wesley argued. “Such is eminently all that liquid fire commonly called drams or spirituous liquors. It is true these may have a place in medicine; they may be of use in some bodily disorders (although there would rarely be occasion for them, were it not for the unskillfulness of the practitioner). Therefore, such as prepare and sell them only for this end may keep their conscience clear. But who are they? Who prepare them only for this end? Do you know ten such distillers in England? Then excuse these. But all who

sell them in the common way, to any that will buy, are poisoners general. They murder his Majesty's subjects by wholesale, neither does their eye pity or spare. They drive them to hell like sheep. And what is their gain? Is it not the blood of these men? Who then would envy their large estates and sumptuous palaces? A curse is in the midst of them: the curse of God cleaves to the stones, timber, the furniture of them. The curse of God is in their gardens, their walks, their groves; a fire that burns to the nethermost hell. Blood, blood, is there: the foundations, the floor, the walls, the roof, are stained with blood!"

An Irish preacher by the name of Sanderson received a letter from Wesley with counsel upon many small matters of conduct and health. "Touch no dram," wrote Wesley. "It is liquid fire. It is a sure though slow poison. It saps the very springs of life. In Ireland, above all countries in the world, I would sacredly abstain from this, because the evil is so general. To this and snuff, and smoky cabins, I impute the blindness which is so exceeding common throughout the nation." Owing to the change in public sentiment wrought by the religious revival drunkenness ceased to be respectable in England.

Swearing in Wesley's day was extraordinarily vehement and ingenious, and it was heard in most social circles. "Whoever spends but a few days in any of our large towns," wrote Wesley, "will find that

senseless, shameless, stupid profaneness is the true characteristic of the English nation." Methodism drove this gross and profane speech out of polite society to saloons, forecastles and trenches, whence they are occasionally summoned by virile playwrights to shock a generation become too refined. The great gain to drama and literature in thus having a reserve of shock words is obvious, and for this advantage the English-speaking world is indebted to the Methodists who, with that economy which they displayed in all matters but faith, put an end to the foolish waste of strong words.

Methodism may have gone too far in condemning the theater, innocent play and dancing. There can be no doubt, however, but that the licentiousness of the period needed a corrective. The notorious immorality of kings and prime ministers was no worse than that of the lower classes, and a sense of order, to say nothing of a religious conscience, demanded some toning down of the natural instincts. Both the sense of order and the ascetic conscience were highly developed in Wesley, and they were transferred to Methodism, which was a magnified Wesley. The drama, indecent speech, luxurious dress and card-playing were attacked as outposts of Satan's advancing legions. They were hurled back, and the so-called "prudery of the Victorian era" marks the high tide of the successful Methodist campaign.

The fifty years of Wesley's preaching were the

most momentous through which England ever passed. Those were the years of the industrial revolution, the effect of a series of the most important mechanical inventions and discoveries—the spinning-jenny of Hargreaves, in 1765; the treatment of iron by an improved process, with pit coal instead of charcoal, in 1760; Arkwright's water-frame, in 1765; Watt's steam-engine, in 1774; wool-combing machines, in 1788; and the opening of many hundreds of miles of canals forming pathways to the sea for the manufactured products. The population of England increased about eighteen per cent in the first half of the century and some fifty-two per cent in the second half. The acceleration of growth in the second half is indicative of the great economic and social changes that were in progress.

Great towns sprang up and the peasant who had been chained to the soil now found himself imprisoned in a city or in the gloomy and unhealthy atmosphere of a mine. On the other hand, fortunes were being made in sugar refining, in the manufacture of chinaware, jewelry and in calico printing. Merchant princes rose in the slave trade and in the India trade. Social inequality became greater than anywhere else in Europe, and manners and morals in the rapidly growing towns, as in aristocratic and court circles, were chaotic and unstandardized.

The bursting money bags of the rich tempted adventurous spirits to take possession by short, direct

methods. Gamblers, stock speculators and highwaymen swarmed over the land. This was the era of the notorious South Sea Bubble. Gambling, particularly card-playing, became a mania. The exploits of reckless criminals, the robberies and hold-ups, show a striking similarity between the early decades of the eighteenth century in England and the twentieth century in the United States. Passenger coaches were plundered in broad daylight. The mail from Bristol to London was robbed five times in five weeks. "You will hear little news of England but of robberies," wrote Walpole, "the numbers of disbanded soldiers and sailors have all taken to the road, or rather to the street; people are almost afraid of stirring after it is dark."

Property owners became panic-stricken. The result was a grotesque penal code designed to scare off the marauders. A man could be condemned to death for stealing a sheep or a horse, or taking forty shillings from a dwelling-house, or picking a man's pocket of more than twelvepence, or taking linen from a bleaching-ground, or cutting down trees in a garden or an orchard, or breaking down the border of a fish-pond so that the fish could escape. There were some one hundred and sixty capital offenses on the statute-books. Men and women were whipped publicly through the streets "at the tail of a cart." The Methodists brought the consolation of the Gospel to men and women sentenced to die for petty

theft and robbery, and the young revivalists in Wesley's train were amazed at their own powers when these mythical monsters whom they visited in prison broke down before their prayers and hymns and professed a hope of mercy in heaven.

The most striking effect of those stern statutes was that notorious bandits became popular heroes, and the legends of Jack Sheppard, Dick Turpin and Jonathan Wild which sprang up are not yet extinct. The fact that those heroes ended their lives on the gallows only increased their glory. They were escorted on their last journey by admiring mobs. Gaolers exhibited the most notorious criminal characters for a price. A fashionable highwayman named M'Lean, condemned to be hanged, had three thousand people come to view him on the first Sunday after his condemnation. It was to a people capable of finding amusement in such sights that Wesley preached salvation by faith.

The humanitarian movement which arose about the middle of the century is distinctly traceable to the religious revival. The prisons, run by concessionaires, had become so foul that many a man begged to be hanged rather than remain in one. John Howard could not bear to ride in a closed carriage after visiting a prison because of the nauseating odors that impregnated his clothes. Howard's labors were inspired by the evangelical revival aroused by Methodism.

The horrors of the slave-trade had not awakened pity among Englishmen before Methodism grew to full strength. Wilberforce, like Howard, was a product of the revival. He was converted while on a journey to Nice by Dr. Isaac Milner, president of Queens College, Cambridge, and dean of Carlisle. He became a leader in the Clapham sect of evangelicals, which included a number of notable persons. He was also interested in an Association for the Better Observance of Sunday, in the foundation of Sunday Schools, and he founded a Society for the Reformation of Manners.

Wesley was one of the first to speak out against slavery. He denounced it in 1758, and in 1774, the year of the foundation of the Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, published his "Thoughts on Slavery." Half the wealth of Liverpool was derived from "that execrable sum of all the villainies commonly called the slave-trade." Wesley attacked the business unsparingly. "But we have lost our Negro Trade" he wrote in his "Serious Advice to the People of England." "I would to God it may never be found more; that we may never more steal and sell our brethren like beasts; never murder them by thousands and tens of thousands. Oh, may this worse than Mahometan, worse than Pagan, abomination be removed from us forever! Never was anything such a reproach to England since it was a nation as the having a hand in this execrable traffic."

The labor movement owes much to Wesley. He organized the laboring classes for religion, but they went on and formed societies for political, social, literary and agricultural purposes. Class leaders, exhorters and local preachers did their utmost to stir up the souls of the common people for the reception of religious ideas, but the awakened minds of the workers concerned themselves with industry and economics, with education and politics. The mining districts of England to this day are strongholds of Methodism.

The greatest service that Wesley rendered his country was, in Lecky's opinion, to save her from a cataclysm like the French Revolution. Social conditions were as ripe for one in England as in France. Economic inequality was greater than in France. The misery of the factory-workers and miners was unparalleled in any other country. The idealistic principles of political and social justice which Montesquieu and Voltaire had popularized in France had been acquired by them in England. Dissenters other than the Methodists were enthusiastically for republicanism. The intelligentsia was tremendously excited. "How much the greatest event it is that ever happened in the world! and how much the best!" wrote Fox when he heard of the fall of the Bastille. Societies were formed to spread the French idea—the Friends of the People, the Revolution Society, the

Society for Constitutional Information, the London Correspondence Society.

The monarchy was alarmed. The king advised every gentleman to read Burke's "Reflections on the Revolution in France," of which thirty thousand copies were sold. An alien law was passed to enable the authorities to prosecute Thomas Paine, author of "The Rights of Man," which had had an even greater circulation than Burke's treatise, and Paine was compelled to seek safety in France. *Habeas corpus* was suspended. The Treasonable Practices Act (1795) made any writing, printing, preaching or speaking, inciting to hatred or contempt of the sovereign, the established government or the constitution, a high misdemeanor. The Seditious Meetings Act made meetings of more than fifty persons without notice to a magistrate illegal. Heavy taxes upon printed matter aimed to make cheap newspapers impossible. Unlicensed debating-clubs and reading-rooms were closed. That an English revolution was feared by the government is obvious.

Nothing serious happened: an attack on the king while on his way to Parliament; some mutinies in the fleet; hooting of Pitt by a mob; much revolutionary oratory; but nothing big or effective. The reason for this inertness was simply the loyalty of the common people to constituted authority. The people accepted Burke's thesis that unless the French ideas were

stamped out, religion, property and the inherited civilization of the past would be submerged in a welter of atheism and democracy. Evangelized England abhorred democracy as it did atheism. The Methodists stood firm against any interference with the established order.

Wesley had published his opinions on republican ideas at the outbreak of the American Revolution. He had taken Samuel Johnson's pamphlet "Taxation No Tyranny" and reprinted it, somewhat abridged, over his own name with the title "A Calm Address to Our American Colonies." The views expressed in the pamphlet may be summarized in Johnson's famous sentence "Sir, they are a race of convicts and ought to be thankful for anything we allow them short of hanging." Forty thousand copies of Wesley's abridgment were sold, and Johnson declared himself honored to have won such a distinguished disciple.

It is not true, argued Wesley, that liberty increases in proportion to the share of the people in the government. "There is most liberty, civil and religious, under a limited monarchy; there is usually less under an aristocracy; and least of all under a democracy."

John Wesley gave rhythmical expression, as was his custom, to the Methodist feeling against the American Revolution in a notable hymn:

Thou knowest thine own appointed time
Th' ungodly homicide to quell,
Chastise their complicated crime,
And break their covenant with hell.
Thy plagues shall then o'erwhelm them all
From proud Ambition's summits driven,
And faith foresees the usurper's fall
As Lucifer cast down from heaven.

"Cobblers, tinkers, porters and hackney coachmen," wrote John Wesley during the excitement about John Wilkes, "think themselves wise enough to instruct both king and council." He personally would no more associate with Methodists who hated the king and his ministers "than with thieves, drunkards, whoremongers and common swearers."

He published a tract to combat the theory that the people are the "origin of power." If that be so, he argued, why are there restrictions and qualifications of the franchise based upon age, property and residence? "Common sense brings us back to the grand truth," he concludes: "there is no power but of God." This power, we must infer, was conferred by God upon the king, and so long as the masses accepted this political philosophy the monarchy was safe.

Methodism is psychologically, politically and economically conservative. Wesley was as firm for economic as for political stability. "What servants, journeymen, labourers, carpenters, bricklayers, do as they

would be done by?" he wrote. "Which of them does as much work as he can? Set him down for a knave that does not! Who does as he would be done by in buying and selling? Write him knave that does not; and the Methodist knave is the worst of all." All Christians were urged to gain and save all they could. There was danger, it was true, of their riches sinking them into hell. To obviate that danger they were to give all they could. Wesley's principle of getting and spending has won an impressive following. Never in history have there been such dazzling applications of a master's teaching.

Wesley's aim had been to form a religious order within the Church of England like that of the Jesuits in the Catholic Church to revive religion and make Englishmen decent and moral. At no time was it his desire to separate from the established church. He did all in his power to prevent it. He forbade holding Methodist meetings at hours that conflicted with regular church services. He refused to allow Methodist "helpers" to administer the sacraments. That function, in his view, was sacred to the regularly ordained priests of the church. He feared that separation would cause Methodism to shrivel into a dry, dull sect doomed to speedy extinction. "I live and die a member of the Church of England," he wrote. In the latter years of his life, indeed, the church which had excluded him from her pulpits opened all her doors to him. Church and state hailed him as a saint and

benefactor; countesses and admirals invited him to their homes; Reynolds and Romney painted his portrait; but, four years after his death, the compact organization of over one hundred thousand Methodists which he had built up in England and America took the step from which he had recoiled and became a separate church.

Methodism is the projection of John Wesley. To understand the movement we must understand the man. He was a great master of the art of influencing the behavior of men, of shaping thought and directing wills. Hardly less interesting is the internal ferment that drove him on.

MOTHER

SUSANNA WESLEY has been called by more than one writer the mother of Methodism, and it is not difficult to see the influence of her mind and character upon her distinguished son. She deliberately set out to give his soul the shape which she believed it ought to have.

When John Wesley was six years old he had a narrow escape from burning to death in his father's parsonage at Epworth, which had been set on fire by unregenerate members of the old rector's flock. The child had been left asleep in a room on the second floor and was missed only when the family on the lawn was counted. Just then John awoke and, mounting a chest, showed himself at the bedroom window. The stairs were on fire and for a moment it seemed certain that John would not escape incineration. But one of the neighbors stood on another's shoulders and lifted him out.

That day Susanna Wesley made the following entry in her diary: "Son John. What shall I render to the Lord for all His mercies? I would offer myself and all that Thou hast given me; and I would resolve—O, give me grace to do it!—that the residue of my life shall be all devoted to Thy service. And I

do intend to be more particularly careful with the soul of this child, that Thou hast so mercifully provided for, than ever I have been; that I may instill in his mind the principles of true religion and virtue. Lord give me grace to do it sincerely and prudently."

Many years later John Wesley wrote that one reason why he had decided not to marry was because he despaired of ever meeting another woman "like my father's wife." He was the fifteenth of Susanna Wesley's nineteen children, nine of whom died at an early age.

In the miraculous rescue from the conflagration of his father's house Wesley saw the first exercise of that special providence that guarded him all through life. Susanna strongly reinforced this notion of John's. In one of her letters to him she relates how a certain rich man by the name of Robert Darwin met an awful but well-merited death after insulting her husband, herself and her children. Returning intoxicated from a fair, Darwin had fallen from his horse and dislocated his knee. His companions had pulled it in again and fixed it until the next day. But he never spoke more. "His face was torn all to pieces, one of his eyes beat out; his under lip cut off; his nose broken down; and, in short, he was one of the dreadfulest examples of the severe justice of God that I have known. This man and one more have now been cut off in the midst of their sins since your father's confinement."

The imprisonment of the rector of Epworth to which Susanna refers was due partly to political persecution. Samuel Wesley was an ardent supporter of William of Orange, the new king, and he took pains to let all the world know it. His opponents, of whom the ill-fated Robert Darwin was one, had taken advantage of the rector's loose business habits and had him thrust into a debtors' prison.

It is clear from the way he spent his three months in prison that to Samuel Wesley also, Methodism is somewhat indebted. "I am getting acquainted with my brother gaolbirds as fast as I can," he wrote home, "and shall write to London next post to the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, who, I hope, will send me some books to distribute among them."

Susanna Wesley doubtlessly derived her remarkable faith in a guiding providence from her celebrated father, the Rev. Samuel Annesley. With nearly two thousand others this distinguished dissenter gave up his position in the established church rather than declare his unqualified assent to everything prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer, as all clergymen were required to do by the Act of Uniformity of 1662.

Although this ancestor of John Wesley led an obscure life in London for ten years after his resignation from the church, "God," it was said, "often remarkably appeared for him," and one magistrate was suddenly struck dead while signing a warrant for his

arrest. Thus was the Wesleyan providence already manifest, on behalf of John Wesley's maternal grandfather.

Susanna Wesley had a powerful and a highly cultivated mind. She displayed many of the qualities prominent in the organizer of Methodism, especially in the education of her children. Susanna wrote letters and attended to business while her large family swarmed around. She measured the amount of sleep allotted to her children quite in the modern scientific fashion. Punctually, on the minute, the child was laid in its cradle. Eating between meals was not allowed except in cases of illness. At table requests were to be whispered to the servant, who relayed them to the mistress. Whatever was placed before a child had to be eaten. Susanna never found any trouble making a child take medicine. Crying as well as sleep and food was regulated. When a child reached the age of one year it was taught to cry softly. Not one was ever heard to cry aloud after it was a year old.

Susanna believed that the first step in forming the mind of a child was to conquer its will. "I insist upon conquering the will of children betimes," she wrote, "because this is the only strong and rational foundation of a religious education, without which both precept and example will be ineffectual. But when this is thoroughly done, then a child is capable of being governed by the reason and piety of its parents till its own understanding comes to maturity, and the

principles of religion have taken root in the mind. As self-will is the root of all sin and misery, so whatever cherishes this in children ensures their wretchedness and irreligion, whatever checks and mortifies it promotes their future happiness and piety. This is still more evident if we consider that religion is nothing less than doing the will of God and not our own—that the one grand impediment to our temporal and eternal happiness being this self-will, no indulgence of it can be trivial, no denial unprofitable."

Thus was John Wesley trained in childhood by his remarkable mother. When he founded his school for Methodist children at Kingswood, he incorporated in the rules of the institution another of Susanna's cherished principles. This was, as she formulated it, never to spend more time in mere recreation on any one day than in religious duties. John Wesley's paraphrase of it ran thus: "We must renounce masquerades, balls, plays, operas and all such light and vain diversions, which, whether the gay people of the world will own it or no, do strongly confirm the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life; all of which we must renounce or renounce our God and hope of eternal salvation."

Exactly on his fifth birthday, like all the rest of his mother's children, John Wesley was compelled to learn the alphabet. Susanna gave each child a day and no more. The next day they plunged into the Sacred Text: "In the beginning God created the

heaven and the earth." The child spelled it out syllable by syllable until he could read without hesitation.

This wonderful woman wrote three elementary books on Christian theology for the instruction of her children. She taught them together as a class, and once a week had a private conference with each child. She records in her diary: "On Monday I talk with Molly; on Tuesday with Hetty; Wednesday with Nancy; Thursday with Jacky; Friday with Patty; Saturday with Charles; and with Emily and Suky together on Sunday."

For her daughter Susanna, aged fourteen, Mrs. Wesley wrote an exposition of the Apostles' Creed, concluding with these words: "I cannot tell whether you have ever seriously considered the lost and miserable condition you are in by nature. If you have not, it is high time to begin to do it; and I shall earnestly beseech the Almighty to enlighten your mind, to renew and sanctify you by his Holy Spirit, that you may be his child by adoption here, and an heir of his blessed kingdom hereafter."

Her letters to her sons after they left home throw further light on the origins of Methodism. This letter, for example, was sent to Samuel, the eldest of her three sons: "I have a great and just desire that all your sisters and brothers should be saved as well as you; but I must own I think my concern for you is much the greatest. What! you my son, you who was

once the son of my tenderest love; my friend in whom is my inexpressible delight, my future hopes of happiness in this world; for whom I weep and pray in my retirement from the world, when no mortal knows the agonies of my soul upon your account, no eye sees my tears which are only beheld by the Father of spirits of whom I so importunately beg grace for you, that I hope I may at last be heard—is it possible that you should be damned? O, that it were impossible! Indeed, I think I could almost wish myself accursed, so I were sure of your salvation. But still I hope, still I would fain persuade myself that a child for whom so many prayers have been offered to Heaven will not at last miscarry. To the protection of the everblessed God, I commit you, humbly beseeching him to conduct you by his grace to his eternal glory."

This was not written to a dissipated youth wasting his substance in riotous living. Not at all. Samuel was an industrious, intelligent and amiable schoolboy who never gave his mother real cause for a moment's anxiety. Susanna Wesley was only yearning to make her eldest son "altogether a Christian," and spared no effort to secure his eternal salvation.

Long before the rise of Methodist women preachers Susanna Wesley conducted a little revival of her own. Her husband was attending convocation in London when she began with Sunday services at the par-

sonage. The word spread abroad and two hundred crowded to the next service. Many could not get in. It was unprecedented, and questionable—this woman in the rôle of a minister of the Gospel. Complaint was made by Samuel Wesley's own curate, also by some of the parishioners. The absent rector wrote home to his wife demanding what she meant by such singular conduct.

Susanna replied: "As to its looking particular I grant it does. And so does almost everything that is serious, or that may any way advance the glory of God or the salvation of souls if it be performed out of a pulpit or in the way of common conversation; because in our corrupt age the utmost care and diligence have been used to banish all discourse of God or spiritual concerns out of society, as if religion were never to appear out of the closet and we were to be ashamed of nothing so much as of professing ourselves to be Christians."

She was not quite sure of the propriety of a woman's presenting the people's prayers to God, and would have dismissed her congregation before prayers but they begged to be allowed to stay. Why did she not get a man to read the prayers, her husband asked?

"Alas! you do not consider what a people these are," she wrote back. "I do not think one man among them could read a sermon without spelling a good

part of it, and how would that edify the rest? Nor has any of our family a voice strong enough to be heard by such a number of people."

After completely demolishing all of her husband's objections to her religious services, Susanna concluded: "If you do after all think fit to dissolve this assembly, do not tell me that you *desire* me to do it, for that will not satisfy my conscience; but send me your *positive command*, in such full and express terms as may absolve me from guilt and punishment for neglecting this opportunity of doing good when you and I shall appear before the great and awful tribunal of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Samuel Wesley feared to take the responsibility of stopping his wife's work for the Lord.

When John asked the advice of both parents about entering the ministry, Samuel said "Wait!"

Susanna wrote: "I was much pleased with your letter to your father about taking orders, and liked the proposal well, but it is an unhappiness almost peculiar to our family that your father and I seldom think alike. I approve the disposition of your mind and think the sooner you are a deacon the better." She gave him singularly shrewd advice on preaching—"the true end of which is to mend men's lives and not to fill their heads with unprofitable speculations."

As long as his mother lived John Wesley sought her advice in critical situations. When Thomas Maxfield, one of his band leaders, undertook to preach

instead of confining himself to reading prayers and the Scriptures, Wesley rushed to London to put a stop to such unheard-of irregularity. Susanna met him when he arrived (she was living then at the Foundery, the Methodist headquarters), and she saw the trouble in his eye:

“Take care what you do with respect to that young man,” she cautioned him when he had explained the nature of the threatening calamity. “He is as surely called of God to preach as you are. Examine what have been the fruits of his preaching, and hear him yourself.”

Wesley took her advice.

“It is the Lord!” he said, after he had heard his disciple’s sermon; “let him do what seemeth him good. What am I that I should withstand God?”

A rare woman! To her vigorous intellect, usually described as masculine, and firm common sense, was joined the warmest devotion to her children.

Samuel once began a letter to her with “Madam.” She wrote back: “Sammy—I do not love distance and ceremony. There is more love and tenderness in the name of mother than in all the complimentary titles in the world.”

The Rev. J. H. Rigg, Wesley’s most sympathetic biographer, points out that he was “naturally a woman-worshipper”; that he could at no time of his life “dispense with the exquisite and stimulating pleasure which he found in their society and corre-

spondence"; that he had "an extreme and natural susceptibility to whatever was graceful and amiable in woman, especially if united to mental vigor and moral excellence." All this began in the family life at Epworth.

John Wesley also was the idol of seven sisters, none of whom was happy in her own life. The eldest sister, Emilia, thwarted in love by the objections of her mother and brothers, married a lazy apothecary whom she was obliged to support by teaching school. After one of John's visits to her at the school, she wrote home: "Mrs. Taylor desires him, the next time he is here, to let his eyelids fall a little lower, which she thinks will become him better than his staring." In another letter she wrote: "We have no duns nor any of that tormenting care to provide bread which we had at Epworth." She lived to be eighty, supported by John at the Foundery.

The second of Susanna's daughters, Mary, beautiful and angelic, was crippled by accident in childhood. A year after her marriage at the age of thirty-six to John Whitelamb, her father's curate, she died.

Another sister, Susanna, married "a coarse, loud-mouthed scoundrel" named Robert Ellison, whom, after many years of abuse and neglect, she left to live with her children in London.

Anne married an incorrigible drunkard.

Hetty, who had read the New Testament at the age of eight, became entangled with an unprincipled

lawyer, left home and married a plumber who spent his nights drinking in pubs.

Kezia was heartbroken over her desertion by the preacher who married her sister Martha. Martha resembled John in form and features; her handwriting was indistinguishable from his. Wesley Hall, the Methodist preacher whom she married, had been a pupil of John's at Oxford, but turned to preaching and practising polygamy. Martha remained serene and forgiving even when, after years of philandering, he brought an illegitimate child and its mother into her house. The Scriptures, Martha said, forbade a woman to dispute the authority of her husband. She was a woman of character and intellect, a valued friend of Dr. Johnson, who often invited her to Bolt Court. She lived to be eighty-five, the last survivor of the Epworth family, and was buried in the same tomb as John.

III

MRS. HAWKINS

JAMES OGLETHORPE had served three years with the British Army in Belgium and several more under Prince Eugène of Savoy, when he retired in 1718 from active military service, famous as a soldier and a gentleman. He was elected and reelected for thirty-two years as a member of Parliament from an obscure borough.

He somehow became interested in the condition of gentlemen in financial straits. There was no bankruptcy law in England, and debtors were imprisoned. Would it not be better, asked Oglethorpe, to send these unfortunates to the New World, where they could make a fresh start, build up for England a profitable colony, and serve immediately as a bulwark to South Carolina, which was exposed to attack by the Spaniards on the south?

In order to attract the support of the church for his project Oglethorpe appealed to religious motives. The Indians ought not to be left to perish without a chance of salvation, he said. His challenge was taken up by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Countries. Sermons pointing out

the duty of Englishmen to the untutored children of the forest were preached. The king became interested. Parliament voted the sum of ten thousand pounds, and the trustees of the Georgia corporation which Oglethorpe had founded were empowered to solicit subscriptions. All funds collected were deposited in the Bank of England, an accounting was made annually, and no member of the corporation was permitted to hold any position of pay or profit under it. The aim of the promoters was to keep the enterprise on a philanthropic basis. The reward of England might come later when trade in silk, wine, oil, dyes and other materials, which she was then purchasing from southern countries, developed.

The climate of Georgia was described by Oglethorpe in a tract as being so salubrious that a certain Indian king, three hundred years old, had living his father, fifty years older than himself. The soil of that southern paradise, ten times as fertile as England, would enable the soft-handed bankrupts and ne'er-do-wells, for whom the colony was designed, to support themselves easily.

By 1736 the story of Oglethorpe and his Georgia colony was known to every person in England. The proprietor of *The Gentlemen's Magazine*, offering a gold medal as a prize for the best four poems on "The Christian Hero," had stamped on one side of the medal the head of the Right Honorable Lady Elizabeth Hastings and on the other a portrait of Ogle-

thorpe with the motto, "England May Challenge the World."

The first minister sent over to look after the religious welfare of the colonists and the Indians proved unsatisfactory, and on the recommendation of the Rev. Dr. John Burton of Oxford and a trustee of the Georgia corporation, John Wesley received the appointment of minister to Savannah and missionary to the Indians. Charles Wesley, six years younger than John, was chosen to share the work with him and was honored besides with the title of private secretary to Oglethorpe. Two other missionaries joined the Wesleys—Benjamin Ingham, aged twenty-three, an Oxford man, and Charles Delamotte, aged twenty-one, son of a sugar merchant of London, who had become personally attached to John Wesley.

While a student at Oxford, John Wesley had become extraordinarily serious at the age of twenty-three under the influence of a "religious friend," Miss Betty Kirkham, daughter of the Rev. Lionel Kirkham, rector of Stanton. At that time too, after reading Jeremy Taylor's "Rules of Holy Living and Dying," he had resolved to dedicate *all* his life to God—*all* his thoughts and acts. He became personally acquainted with William Law, a powerful writer, whose "A Practical Treatise of Christian Perfection" and "Serious Call to Devout and Holy Life" were making many religious enthusiasts.

Wesley had had some practical experience as a minister, having been for two years his father's curate at Wroote, a parish which, in addition to Epworth, was under Samuel Wesley's care. Upon his return to Oxford, at the call of the authorities to take up the duties proper to his fellowship, John Wesley had become the leader of a club started by his brother Charles and three or four other students, for the purpose of making religion the great business of their lives. Besides performing their college work with a regularity offensive to the majority of the Oxford scholars, the members of the club attended all the church rites and services, read the Bible assiduously, prayed in private, visited prisoners, the sick and poor, and fasted every Wednesday and Friday.

It was a sceptical age and religion generally was at a low ebb. The group became known as Methodists, Bible-bigots, Bible-moths, the Godly Club and the Holy Club. The jeers of the university community were rather welcome than otherwise to the Oxford Methodists, who longed to suffer like true Christians. They subjected themselves to searching self-examination in order to further their attainment of "simplicity and the love of God." The death of one of them, William Morgan, it is believed, was hastened by the dangerous asceticism which he practised. John Wesley himself, warned by a pulmonary attack accompanied by hemorrhages, was persuaded to seek the goal of martyrdom more slowly.

There were on board the *Simmonds* which the four friends boarded on October 14, 1735, twenty-six Moravians going to Georgia to escape persecution at home. They too intended to carry the Gospel to the Indians. From the first Wesley was attracted to them and he set himself to learn their language. He joined them in their religious services, sang with them, and took every opportunity to be in their company.

At the Isle of Wight, where the *Simmonds* was delayed until the man-o'-war *Hawk*, which was to act as convoy, arrived, the four friends took a walk and made the solemn agreement "that none of us will undertake anything of importance without proposing it to the other three. That whenever our judgments or inclinations differ, any one shall give up his single judgment or inclination to the others. That in the case of an equality, after begging God's direction, the matter shall be decided by lot." Usually there was a majority in favor of John Wesley's proposals.

The four friends constituted in effect another Holy Club. They had a duty for every minute of the day, and at fixed intervals met and gave an account of their activities and made plans for the future. They objected to the maid of one of the passengers on the ground that she was suspected of theft and unchastity. She was set ashore and, to show his disgust, the passenger, a Mr. Horton, kept them awake by danc-

ing on the deck over their heads between twelve and one at night.

Wesley took up the methods of salvation which he had pursued at Oxford. He discontinued the use of meat and wine, limiting himself to vegetables, chiefly rice and biscuits, left off eating suppers and slept on the floor. His discovery that he could sleep well on the "hard" floor filled him with exultation. "I believe," he wrote, "I shall not find it needful to go to bed, as it is called, any more."

From the first day on the *Simmonds* Wesley set to work improving every soul on board. He read Norris's "Christian Prudence" to an uneducated servant woman, a Mrs. Moore, for an hour and three quarters and was surprised she did not like it. He records on November 17, 1735, that all the people were angry at his "expounding" so often; but he reasoned with them until all were "convinced and affected." Oglethorpe himself, handsome and gallant, with a romantic past and a tragic destiny perhaps awaiting him in mortal combat with Spaniards and Indians, did not escape Wesley's attentions. Wesley felt it his duty to reprove the gallant soldier for his behavior with the ladies. The governor took the rebuke genially, but gave the missionary cause to repeat the admonition the next day. Two days later he was again seen "talking" to the women. Wesley now felt the time had come to pray for the founder of Georgia, and he noted the fact in his diary.

Wesley's main effort was directed to saving the soul of a Mrs. Hawkins who had brought a bad reputation with her, but the more nearly lost Mrs. Hawkins was reputed to be the more insistent did Wesley feel the call to save her. She had married the surgeon of the ship, but that fact had no effect upon her high spirits.

Wesley often read devotional books like Law's "Christian Perfection" and a translation of the "Life of Gregory Lopez" to Mrs. Hawkins or conversed with her seriously. She let him talk. Her outbreaks of temper sometimes shocked him, but again she appeared to soften and once even cried and told him her life. He notes in his diary that she was "often amazed," a thrilling tribute from such a profound sinner to the holy fire in him. When she fell sick he began to hope that "God's work would be perfected in her."

On every page of the diary which Wesley kept in his peculiar cipher during the voyage Mrs. Hawkins' name appears two or three times. Sometimes she was "affected" by his "close conversations" or she was "open." Often he "got no good" (made no impression) or she was "very angry." She told him tearfully that her mother had died when she was but ten years old. Among her mother's last words were: "Child, fear God; and though you lose me you shall never want a friend." Now she had found a friend, she said, when she most needed and least expected one.

Charles Wesley, always exceedingly hard boiled with regard to his brother's affairs, warned him that Mrs. Hawkins was a hypocrite and only drawing him on. The Holy Club and most of the ship's company saw through her. But John announced his intention of admitting Mrs. Hawkins to Holy Communion. The Holy Club, the Moravian bishop, Nitschman, and several respectable British subjects protested. If she had a bad reputation, insisted Wesley, so much the more reason for standing by her. With his usual naïveté, he told Mrs. Hawkins of the arguments. She wept and was "desperately affected and open." With the same frankness he discussed her case with several other persons and so added to the gaiety of life on shipboard.

Wesley's diary entries show that he was in a mystically exalted mood. In submitting to the reproaches of his angry friends he believed that he was in some humble measure knowing the sufferings of the Lord, bearing the cross and despising the shame. Having consulted everybody who wished to be heard he overruled them all and admitted Mrs. Hawkins to the sacrament of Holy Communion.

The ships were held for two months by head winds at Cowes. One night Wesley, awakened by the tossing of the vessel and the roaring of the wind, knew (he wrote) that he was "unfit to die" because he was afraid.

Finally on December 10, 1735, the little fleet, con-

sisting of the *Simmonds*, the *Hawk* and the *London Merchant*, sailed. Rough weather began when they were three days out. The seas broke over the *Simmonds* from stem to stern and burst into the cabins. On January, 17, 1736, Wesley wrote in his diary:

9. [o'clock] A storm. Sea broke in to us!
10. Prayer, conversed; afraid to die; storm still!
11. Prayer, conversed $\frac{1}{2}$ [hour]; lay on the boards; slept!
12. Stormy still and afraid!
 1. Lay on Mrs. Welch's bed. She in Mr. Oglethorpe's (cabin). Calmer, Resolved not to please myself in eating or drinking. Thankfulness with our Resolution [the one made at Cowes].

Next day he led the passengers in returning thanks to God for their deliverance, but was chagrined that only a few of them would admit that they had been saved from death. "Like true cowards, among whom were most of the sailors, they denied we had been in any danger. I could not have believed that so little good would have been done by the terror they were in before."

A second storm broke on January 23, and Wesley was almost drowned by a huge wave rolling over the side of the ship. "How is it thou hast no faith, being still unwilling to die?" he comments.

On January 25 the colonists were caught in a hurricane. The Germans calmly prayed and sang. They

had just begun a psalm when the sea came over the ship and split the mainsail. "The water poured between the decks as if the great deep had already swallowed us up," writes Wesley. The English screamed; the Germans sang on. Wesley went among his hysterical countrymen calling their attention to the behavior of the Moravians, and when the hurricane had blown itself out he asked one of the Moravians whether he had not been afraid. "I thank God, no," replied the German. "But were not your women and children afraid?" Wesley enquired. No. The Moravian women and children were not afraid to die. "This was the most glorious day which I have hitherto seen," wrote Wesley in his *Journal*. He had found a people who had overcome fear!

Part of the crew and passengers went ashore. Those that remained on board (until accommodations should be prepared for them on land) were celebrating the end of the arduous voyage by getting dead drunk when Wesley returned and angrily stove in the rum-casks. This was probably the first case of prohibition enforcement in American history. Prohibition was already in the statutes drawn up for the colony by the Georgia trustees. The Salzburgers from the *London Merchant*, with Ingham and Charles Wesley, the Hawkinses and the Welches, went to Frederica, a town lying about one hundred miles

along the coast south of Savannah. John Wesley and Delamotte remained at Savannah.

On February 23 John Wesley noted in his diary that he had gone ashore and read the "Life of God in the Soul of Man," by Scougal, with Mrs. Hawkins, and that two hours of this exercise produced a "serious effect" upon her, but that it all quickly vanished "in light company." On March 1 she was deeply melancholy and refused to speak. Wesley talked about her with her husband and with Oglethorpe. He prayed for her with Charles and Delamotte. The first line in his diary the next day is "Sung and prayed for Mrs. Hawkins." The Moravian minister, August Gottlieb Spangenberg, with whom Wesley lodged, advised him to let Mrs. Hawkins alone, quoting Thomas à Kempis: "Avoid all good women, commend them to God." Next day, being one of his regular fast days, Wesley went nineteen hours without food or sleep. Mrs. Hawkins took boat for Frederica and Wesley sat down to write up his *Journal*, which he continued to do for five hours. He knew his susceptibility to illusion, and anxious not to deceive himself had been committing the case from day to day to paper in the form of an "account," a "statement," a "conference" or an entry in "journal" or "diary."

While John Wesley was bending all his energies to the saving of Mrs. Hawkins, Charles Wesley applied himself to the salvation of Mrs. Welch. In his opinion, the precarious state of Mrs. Welch's soul was

due to the evil dominance of her friend Mrs. Hawkins. He had made some progress on the ship but soon after landing the "meek but teachable Mrs. Welch" (that was on the ship) became "so wilful, so untractable, so fierce," that it was dangerous to come near to her. She was "all storm and tempest."

At Frederica, Charles continued his efforts in Mrs. Welch's behalf. His frequent visits sometimes extended till midnight, and Oglethorpe had him dogged, but Charles was simply attending to his pastoral duties, trying with prayer, reading and conversation to set his parishioner on the right road. Mrs. Welch, declaring that she would no longer be "priest-ridden," scoffed at prayers and talked in the ribald style of her friend and evil genius, Mrs. Hawkins.

To the bewilderment of Charles Wesley, Oglethorpe now began showing an unaccountable animosity toward him. The governor avoided him. Charles had come without extra personal baggage, expecting everything would be provided by his chief, with whom he was to reside. Oglethorpe gave orders that his secretary was not to use any of his furniture. This left Charles without a bed to sleep on. He lay on the ground in the corner of a hut belonging to a friendly colonist, caught a fever and became so weak he could not attend to any of his clerical duties. He felt that his life was in danger and induced Ingham to go to Savannah and summon John to his assistance.

Mrs. Hawkins and Mrs. Welch had set the whole

town of Frederica in an uproar. Charles Wesley was at his wit's end. His explanations in his *Journal* of the motives of the actors in this drama are those of a boy deriving his knowledge of men and women from chance Bible texts.

At this point Oglethorpe went off with a party of Indians for some hunting. Regarding himself, as surgeon of the colony, above petty regulations, Hawkins broke the rule against firing a gun on Sunday and was clapped in gaol. His wife, to show where her sympathies lay, took a gun, likewise broke the Sunday law and dared the constable to arrest her. She remained at liberty, but was ordered out of the camp. She came the next day, however, with some bottles in her hands. Charles Wesley, who is our authority, does not state what was in the bottles. He heard Mrs. Hawkins cry out "Murder!" and ran away to the woods. "Returning out of the woods, I was informed by Mr. Welch that that poor blockhead, Mrs. Welch, had joined Mrs. Hawkins and the devil in their slanders of me [accusing him, among other things, of instigating the constable to enforce the Sunday law]. I would not believe it until half the town told me the same. Soon after, Haydon informed me that he had civilly told Mrs. Hawkins his orders were not to suffer her to come within the camp; but he would carry those bottles for her. She replied she would come, and upon his holding open his arms to hinder her, broke one of the bottles on his head. He

caught her in his arms, she striking him continually and crying out ‘Murder!’ Hawkins at the same time ran up and struck him. He closed and threw him down, set his foot upon him, and said if he resisted he would run his bayonet into him. Mark Hird, the other constable, was meantime engaged in keeping off Mrs. Hawkins, who broke the other bottle on his head. Welch coming up to her assistance, Davison, the constable, desired him to keep off the camp. Nevertheless, he ran upon him, took the gun out of his hand and struck him with all his might on his sides and face, till Haydon interposed and parted them. Welch then ran and gave the doctor a bayonet; which was immediately taken from him. Mrs. Hawkins cried out continually against the parsons, and swore revenge against my brother and me.”

On the day on which Charles wrote this graphic account of life in Georgia, John was sending him a long letter sprinkled with Latin and Greek sentences. “I conjure you to spare no time,” he wrote, “no address or pains to learn the true cause of the former distress of my friend. I much doubt you are in the right. God forbid that she should again in like manner miss the mark. Watch over her, keep her, as much as possible. Write to me, how I ought to write to her. If Mr. Ingham were here I would try to see you. But omit no opportunity of writing. I stand in jeopardy every hour.” A gentleman in Savannah had given a ball, but the dancers had gone to Wesley’s

church and left the ballroom nearly empty. The gentleman and his friends were angry and threatening.

As soon as Ingham arrived at Savannah, John set out with Delamotte for Frederica in a periagua, a flat-bottomed barge clumsily decked. He arrived at Frederica on April 10, and Oglethorpe came on board the barge to welcome him. John Wesley immediately went to work, praying, reading, conversing, expounding to save the ungodly Fredericans. Mrs. Hawkins came to his meeting but was cold and reserved.

Next day the brothers withdrew to the woods to be "free from spies and ruffians," impossible in the flimsy huts of Frederica. Even there they conversed in Latin. Charles let John read his journal in which he had put down Mrs. Welch's admissions concerning herself, Mrs. Hawkins and the general, namely, that she and Mrs. Hawkins were in love with Oglethorpe and that they had plotted to set the governor against the Wesleys. "We must supplant the parsons," Mrs. Hawkins had said to her, "and then we will have Oglethorpe to ourselves. Do you accuse Charles Wesley to him and I will accuse the other." John returned to Savannah sorrowing over the lost innocence of the governor.

The inclination to play-acting appears strikingly in the behavior of the governor and both his ministers. Oglethorpe was keenly aware of his romantic and

tragic rôle. On Easter Eve, April 24, he set out on a military expedition to the south. Before going he summoned Charles and spoke to him in a tone of mournful dignity. He had just received a letter from John, he said, in which the writer "renewed his suspicions" of the governor. "I could clear up all, but it matters not, you will soon see the reasons for my actions. I am now going to death, you will see me no more. Take this ring," and he handed Charles a diamond ring which he was to bring to a Mr. V—— in London who would befriend him.

He continued sadly: "I have expected death for some days. These letters show that the Spaniards have long been seducing our allies and intend to cut us off at a blow. I fall by my friends, on whom I depended to send their promised succors. But death is nothing to me; I will pursue all my designs and to Him I recommend them and you."

Charles replied in the same tragic strain: "If post-remum fato quod te alloquor, hoc est [if this be the last time I am allowed to speak to you], hear what you will quickly know to be the truth as soon as you are entered upon a separate state [gone to heaven]: this ring I shall never make any use of for myself; I have no worldly hopes, I have renounced the world—life is bitterness to me—I came hither to lay it down [he was twenty-six years old]—you have been deceived as well as I." The warrior's sternness relaxed. After a further exchange of compliments Oglethorpe

embraced and kissed his secretary and when the boat put off Charles ran with others through the woods to get a last glimpse of him. Oglethorpe stopped the boat and asked what they wanted. "God is with you; go forth, Christo duce, et auspice Christo," shouted Charles. "You have," replied Oglethorpe, "some verses of mine; you will there see my thoughts of success." As the boat passed out of sight, Charles was on his knees praying for the governor.

Five days later Charles saw a boat coming up at nine in the evening. It was Oglethorpe returning. The "three large ships and four smaller" which had been threatening a descent upon the colony, unable to stay until the contrary winds subsided, had departed. The governor and the secretary took a walk during which Oglethorpe expressed regret for his "late passionateness." He ordered everything he thought his secretary wanted and promised to have a house built for him immediately.

In the latter part of July Charles, being heartily sick of his job as secretary to the governor, minister to the impious Fredericans, and licensor to the Indian traders, grasped at Oglethorpe's suggestion to return to England with letters and despatches. He wished to resign his position as secretary on the spot, but held back at Oglethorpe's request in order not to embarrass the administration with a crowd of applicants who would be sure to spring up immediately. In parting, Oglethorpe gave the young missionary

a little paternal advice: "On many accounts I should recommend to you marriage rather than celibacy," the governor said. "You are of a social temper and would find in a married state the difficulties of working out your salvation exceedingly lessened and your helps as much increased." Charles followed this advice as soon as he had an opportunity.

He set out for Charleston and from there embarked in the *London Galley* with a drunken captain. The ship sprang a leak, and but little water having been provided owing to the captain's predilection for gin all hands were put on rations. It was decided by the crew to steer the ship with the gin-soaked captain to New England, and after much difficulty they made Boston on September 24. The Bostonians and neighboring Christians smothered Charles with hospitality. The clergy came from the small towns and dragged him along on their return to preach to their congregations. "I am wearied with this hospitable people," he wrote to John in Latin, "they so vex and tease me with their civilities. They do not suffer me to be alone." On the voyage across the Atlantic the good ship *Hannah* ran into a terrific storm, and it became necessary to cut down the mizzenmast to save her. One huge sea washed away the sheep, half the hogs and drowned most of the fowl. Charles tried to pray but in vain. He then asked for power to pray, for faith in Jesus Christ, continually repeating His name till he felt the virtue of it at last and knew that

he abode under the shadow of the Almighty. Charles had been gone fourteen months when his ship arrived at Deal on December 3. His friends received him with inexpressible joy (a report having been published that the *Hannah* had been seen to sink) as one who had risked his life on the stormy deep and in the wilds of America for the salvation of souls and the extension of the kingdom of Christ.

John Wesley now had the spiritual welfare of the whole colony of Georgia to look after. He decided to go to Frederica and see how the congregation there was faring. He found that stiff-necked people in a deplorable religious condition and set to work without a moment's delay repairing the ruins by means of prayers, talks, songs, readings and visits. He never lacked an audience. There was something in him that compelled even the Georgians to listen.

Before leaving Frederica, Charles had written a letter to John in which he expressed himself freely regarding some members of his flock and characterized two individuals particularly by two Greek words. This letter John carelessly dropped. It was picked up and found its way to the hands of the persons most concerned.

One day Wesley was talking to Mr. Horton in a street in Frederica. Horton was a frank critic of the Wesleys, and yet not ill-disposed toward them. It was he who had warned them against Mrs. Hawkins. He had told Charles she was "a common prostitute

and a complete hypocrite." "I like nothing you do," he had said to John Wesley on one occasion.

In the midst of their conversation Mrs. Welch came up and inquired with an oath what Wesley meant by saying she was an adulteress. The rapidly gathering audience was then treated to a selection of scurrility and profanity never before heard on that part of the Atlantic Coast.

A few days later Wesley called upon Dr. Hawkins for his "decoction of bark." The doctor being away, Mrs. Hawkins invited the pastor to sit down. Wesley remarked it was unfriendly of the doctor to show Charles's letter around. Mrs. Hawkins replied that all the women in Frederica were uneasy and affronted at the two Greek words in the letter. Not knowing what they meant, they thought them a general reflection upon all. "Pray tell me what do they mean?" she begged. The temptation to expound was irresistible. In the first place, Wesley explained, his brother's words were not his and he should not be held to account for them. In the second place, at the time the letter was written many things that had since been cleared up were still dark. In the third place, he understood Charles to mean by those two words only two persons, and nobody else, the lady he was talking to and Mrs. Welch.

The lady sprang up shouting "Villain!" "Scoundrel!" "Pitiful rascal!" Just then the doctor himself entered.

"That dog, his brother," screamed Mrs. Hawkins, "meant me by those d——d words!"

The doctor came to his wife's aid with an assortment of curses of his own.

"I was much grieved," wrote Wesley in his *Journal*, "and indeed could not refrain from tears. I know not whether they interpreted this as fear, but they rose in their language and told me they would unfrock me."

The next Sunday afternoon a servant of Mrs. Hawkins came to Wesley with the request that he call upon her mistress on a matter of importance. He never disregarded invitations of that nature. Houses and furnishings being of a primitive style, Mrs. Hawkins invited the minister to sit down on the side of the bed. She then planted herself in front of him with her hands behind her back and uttered forth her soul: "Sir, you have wronged me and I will shoot you through the head with a brace of balls!" She held a pistol in one hand and a pair of scissors in the other. Wesley caught hold of both hands. "Villain, dog, let go my hands!" she screamed. She swore she would have his hair, which he wore long, or his heart's blood. He could not throw her off by force without hurting her, and did not like to call out. Wesley was five feet four inches and never weighed more than one hundred and twenty pounds. A maid came in, followed by two men servants, but all were afraid to interfere. Mr. Davison, a constable, and a Mr. Reed entered and

were about to take hold of Mrs. Hawkins when her husband appeared on the scene. "What is that scoundrel doing in my house?" he demanded. He dared any one to lay a finger on his wife. She, unable to free her hands from Wesley's hold, seized his cassock with her teeth and ripped both sleeves to pieces. She then fastened her teeth on his arm. Two more men had come in but dared not interpose. Wesley now appealed to Hawkins himself, who realizing that the contest was becoming rather public, seized his wife by the waist and pulled her away from her victim.

According to Wesley's own account, which has here been followed, it does not appear that Mrs. Hawkins actually cut his hair, but a writer in *The Gentlemen's Magazine* some years later stated that he was in Georgia at the time and saw Wesley preaching with the hair on one side of his head cut shorter than on the other. It would seem improbable that a man of Wesley's good sense and extraordinary care of his appearance would show himself in the pulpit in such a fashion. A phrase in a letter he wrote to Oglethorpe, however, can mean nothing else: "The treatment I have met with was not barely an assault; you know one part of it was felony."

Wesley demanded a public hearing of Oglethorpe in order that he might have an opportunity to reply to the slanders which the Hawkins couple were circulating. For once he was angry and refused Oglethorpe's attempts at a reconciliation. The governor

brought the minister and the doughty Hawkinses together privately, however, and convinced them that it would serve the interests of the colony better, as well as their own standing, if the quarrel were adjusted. Wesley reluctantly consented. One article of the agreement was that he and the Hawkinses should not speak to each other.

Up to that time Wesley had felt it his sacred duty not to give up his desperate fight for Mrs. Hawkins's salvation. He now admitted his defeat: "Blessed be God," he wrote in his *Journal*, "who hath at length given me a full discharge, in the sight of men and angels, from all intercourse with one whose heart is snares and knots and her hands as bands."

SOPHIA HOPKEY

WESLEY's love affair with Sophia Hopkey was the cause of his abrupt departure from Georgia, and it prepared his mind for the spiritual crisis known as his "conversion." The facts were not available before the Reverend Nehemiah Curnock deciphered and published Wesley's Savannah diary together with the hitherto unpublished portions of his *Journal*. We now have every detail of the romance set down by Wesley himself.

Sophia Hopkey lived with her uncle Thomas Causton, the storekeeper and first magistrate of Savannah. She was an amiable girl of eighteen, a lily in the ill-smelling pond of early Georgia society. One of her undesirable suitors, Thomas Mellichamp, had promised to murder her and any man she might prefer to him.

"Miss Sophy," as Wesley always called her, was one of a small group of eighteen to whom he administered the Eucharist soon after his arrival. He noted that she was "affected" by the rite. She became one of the most faithful of his expanded Holy Club, no light undertaking for her. Wesley had prescribed

for himself and his followers a rigorous course of rites and rules. He himself rose at four, spent the first hour or hour and a half in private or public prayer, expounded the Scriptures twice a day; read prayers morning, noon and evening. Every hour, or oftener, he noted in his small diary the number of minutes he had given to personal prayer—usually five, six or seven. He fasted Wednesdays and Fridays. Afternoons he visited the sick and the needy. He believed he was following the custom of the primitive church as in the days of the apostles.

Sophia attended prayers early and late, fasted Fridays, dressed simply, looked down upon the frivolities of this world and was more concerned about safely reaching heaven than in abiding comfortably here below. She attended early morning prayers at Wesley's house and soon fell into the habit of staying for breakfast with Wesley and Delamotte.

Wesley was thirty-three years old, personally one of the most agreeable of men. He soon began to understand whither his heart was hurrying him and began to watch himself carefully. Here was his dilemma: If he married Sophia his career as a missionary to the Indians was ended. He would settle down in a comfortable house. He would be a good husband, father and model citizen. On the other hand, if he persisted in his ambition to save the souls of the Indians he would be disqualified for domestic happiness.

After the departure of Charles, John had made one or two trips to Frederica, which was without a minister, in a loyal effort to keep up the religious work begun by Charles. Sophia was staying with friends in Frederica and John Wesley thought it time for him to pay the congregation another visit.

Before setting out Wesley asked Causton whether he had any message for the girl. The storekeeper gave him some pretty broad hints.

"The girl will never be easy till she is married," he said.

"Sir," replied Wesley, "she is too much afflicted to have a thought of it."

"I'll trust a woman for that," said Causton. "There is no other way."

"But there are few here who you would think fit for her," Wesley cautiously remarked.

"Let him be but an honest man, an honest good man; I don't care whether he has a groat. I can give them a maintenance," Causton assured him.

Wesley requested specific instructions: "I give her up to you," said Causton. "Do what you will with her. Take her into your own hands. Promise her what you will. I will make it good."

These were proper words from Sophia's uncle to her pastor. The hint that he was also talking man to man was not lost upon Wesley.

Wesley made the hundred miles to Frederica in a periagua, with a crew of four. The congregation had

fallen sadly. Miss Sophia was but the shadow of her former self—religiously speaking. “Harmless company had stole away all her strength.” Worse yet—she was resolved to return to England.

Wesley reasoned with her not to imperil her soul by abandoning the colony. He read her the most affecting parts of Law’s “Serious Call” and of Ephrem Syrus (“the most awakened writer of all the ancients”). In vain! He appealed on the ground of friendship. She then burst into tears, saying, “Now my resolution begins to stagger.” It did so more and more every day.

After Wesley had been in Frederica a week, Oglethorpe returned from one of his southerly expeditions. He greeted everybody cordially, but took no more notice of the minister than if he had not been there. The general’s freezing reception hurt Wesley deeply.

“You can go to England now,” Wesley said to Sophia. “I can be of no assistance to you here any longer; my influence is gone.”

“Now I will not stir a foot,” responded Sophia gallantly. “Sir, you encouraged me in my greatest trials. Be not discouraged in your own! Fear nothing! If Oglethorpe will not help you, God will.”

Oglethorpe ordered the girl to return to Savannah, and in Wesley’s boat.

“I saw the danger to myself,” writes Wesley, “but yet had a good hope I should be delivered out of it (1) because it was not my choice which brought me

into it; (2) because I still felt in myself the same desire and design to live a single life; and (3) because I was persuaded should my desire and design be changed, yet her resolution to live single would continue."

They set out in the periagua about noon with the crew of four rowing and a Savannah young man as passenger.

They rowed long distances hugging the shore closely and landing frequently. Wesley entertained his friend by reading to her Patrick's "Prayers" and Fleury's "History of the Church." Every hour he prayed with her; sometimes he sang hymns, for he had a good voice and loved singing. They camped; they ate oysters; and one night a wakeful hour was beguiled by Wesley's exposition of the "excellent woman," presumably the well-known description in the last chapter of Proverbs.

One evening they landed on an uninhabited island, made a fire, supped, "went to prayers" together, and then spread the sail over them on four stakes to keep off the night dews.

Under this on one side were Miss Sophia, Wesley and the boy from Savannah; on the other the boat's crew. "The northeast wind was high and piercing cold, and it was the first night Sophia had ever spent in such a lodging. But she complained of nothing, appearing as satisfied as if she had been warm upon a bed of down."

They crossed Dobay Sound next morning. The wind being high and the sea rough, Wesley asked the girl: "Miss Sophy, are you not afraid to die?"

"No. I don't desire to live any longer," she replied calmly. "Oh, that God would let me go now! Then I should be at rest. In this world I expect nothing but misery."

Wesley was delighted.

They were obliged to land on St. Catherine's Island and remained there two days.

Wesley writes: "The more I observed, the more was I amazed. Nothing was ever improper or ill-timed. All she said and did was equally tinctured with seriousness and sweetness. She was often in pain, which she could not hide; but it never betrayed her into impatience. She gave herself up to God, owning she suffered far less than she deserved."

They talked on moral problems such as "Is it right to lie in order to do good?" They sat in the shade of a clump of bushes by the side of a spring (for the autumn sun was hot at midday) and had a "close conversation" on Christian holiness.

The next day they attempted to resume their voyage but the waves dashed over the boat and the cold was so piercing they were forced to land again on another part of the same island.

That night, as they lay by their campfire, observing that Sophia was awake, Wesley asked her:

"Miss Sophy, how far are you engaged to Mr. Mellichamp?"

"I have promised either to marry him or to marry no one at all," she replied.

"Miss Sophy," remarked Wesley impulsively, "I should think myself happy if I was to spend my life with you."

She burst into tears. "I am every way unhappy. I won't have Tommy; for he is a bad man, and I can have no one else." Then solemnly: "Sir, you don't know the danger you are in. I beg you would speak no word more on this head."

They ended their conversation with a psalm, which seems to indicate that in order not to awaken the other campers they had withdrawn from the fire-lit circle.

Wesley comments that his remark about spending his life with Sophia was the expression of a sudden wish, not of any formed design.

After a long pull the next day, the party landed on Bear Island, and took a two-hour walk. They embarked again late in the afternoon and landed on another island where they were forced to spend a night without food or fire. Sophia hung her apron on two small sticks to keep the wind off her head and lay down "under the canopy of heaven with all the signs of perfect content."

Next day they reached Savannah.

It was decided among Causton, Wesley and Sophia that she should come to Wesley's house every morning and evening for instruction; that at home she should not be forced to see any company except by her own choice, and that the wicked Mellichamp should never be mentioned to her again. Wesley taught her French and read sermons and Ephrem Syrus at meetings of the Holy Club which she attended regularly.

Wesley found it impossible to maintain the spiritual coolness which he deemed proper in his conversations with Sophia. He tried the corrective of incessant employment. Part of his labor was an abridged French grammar for the use of his pupil. He tried absence, took a boat up the river to a small colony named Irene, cut down trees, talked with the inhabitants, read Hickes' "Reformed Devotions" and returned the same afternoon. Next day he stopped work and formed a resolution, but frankly told Sophia about it. He read German and Hebrew, prayed and made more resolutions.

A sample of these resolutions against Sophia is found in his American diary:

December 19, 1736.

In the name of God,

1. To be more watchful, before and in prayer,
2. To strive to be more thoughtful in eating,
3. Not to touch even her clothes by choice; think not of her,

4. Every hour, Have I prayed quite sincerely? Pray that you may, watch, strive,
5. Look into no book but the Bible till Christmas,
6. From twelve to four o'clock, prayer, meditation, or parish, no writing or reading,
7. At Miss Bovey's, start up the moment you end the paragraph. No word afterward,
8. Speak no unintended or unintended word.

By February he had got to the point of again hinting at marriage but without making a direct proposal. It was a sudden thought, he remarks, which had not the consent of his mind. He was now two persons. One had a future planned in which he was to be a celibate saver of souls; the other was in love with Sophia. Sophia missed or refused to grasp her opportunity, for Wesley had said enough so that, as he himself believed, had she taken him up his judgment would have made but faint resistance. But she remarked that it was best for clergymen not to be encumbered with worldly cares and that it was best for her to remain single—she was resolved not to marry.

“Upon reflection,” wrote Wesley, “I thought this was a very narrow escape.”

Feeling his weakness, he now began to look around for assistance. He asked the advice of Toltschig, one of the Moravian pastors. What would happen if he broke with Miss Sophia, asked the Moravian. “I fear her soul would be lost,” replied Wesley, “being sur-

rounded with dangers and having no other person to warn her against them."

"What would happen if you should not break off?" continued Toltschig.

"I fear I should marry her," answered Wesley.

"I don't see why you should not," said the other dryly.

Wesley had expected a different answer. He took Ingham and Delamotte into consultation. They disagreed with Toltschig. Bishop Geifart, another Moravian, was called in as consultant. Ingham argued that Sophia's sincerity in religion was not proved. Her piety might be only a device to marry Wesley. Wesley, realizing that he was not in a proper mental state to decide the question, took Ingham's advice and again exiled himself at Irene. Before going he wrote Sophia a note:

I find, Miss Sophy, I cannot take fire into my bosom and not be burnt. I am therefore retiring for a while to desire the direction of God. Join with me, my friend, in fervent prayer, that He would show me what is best to be done!

On February 8, however, he remembered something that called him to Savannah, where he stayed one hour, and again "felt and groaned under the weight of an unholy desire. My heart was with Miss Sophy all the time. I longed to see her, were it but for a moment. And when I was called to the boat it was as the sentence of death; but believing it the call of God, I obeyed."

On February 12, a Saturday, he returned to Savannah for good and announced to his friends he had come to a decision, and early on Monday he told Sophia in the garden:

"I am resolved, Miss Sophy, if I marry at all not to do it till I have been among the Indians."

How she took it at the moment is not stated, but the next day she informed him:

"People wonder what I can do so long at your house. I am resolved not to breakfast with you any more. And I won't come to you any more alone." A day later, she remarked: "I don't think it signifies for me to learn French any more." But "my uncle and aunt as well as I will be glad of your coming to our house as often as you please."

When he called at the Caustons' a week later she was not interested in anything he said but in such a temper as he had never seen her in before, sharp, fretful and disputatious. She apologized later. She had been ill all day and scarce in her senses.

She still came to prayers and readings; he still walked home with her and called at the Caustons'.

After one of his calls he wrote: "This was indeed an hour of trial. Her words, her air, her eyes, her every motion and gesture, were full of such softness and sweetness. I know not what might have been the consequence had I then but touched her hand! And how I avoided it I know not. Surely God is over all!"

The next day, a Sunday, his resolution was not so firm. Sophia lingered after the rest of the company had left the parsonage, and Delamotte obligingly withdrew, leaving the lovers alone. After a "very serious conversation" he took her by the hand and "perceiving that she was not displeased, was so utterly disarmed that that hour I should have engaged myself for life had it not been for the full persuasion I had of her entire sincerity, and doubted not but she was resolved (as she had said) never to marry while she lived."

Young Delamotte, his twenty-two year old disciple, now became alarmed. With tears in his eyes he told his revered friend and teacher that he (Delamotte) would have to change his abode, for he could not live in the same house with Wesley and Sophia after they were married. Wesley assured him he had no intention of marrying. Delamotte was certain it would come to that unless he stopped speaking to Miss Sophia.

Wesley now saw that he could postpone the day of judgment no longer. He must choose Sophia as a wife or lose her entirely. He agreed to set aside a day for making the momentous decision.

He and Delamotte fasted and prayed. They then took three slips of paper and wrote on one "Marry," on the other "Think not of it this year," and on a third "Think of it no more." After praying again, Delamotte drew. It was number three. They then

inquired of the Oracle—the Bible—similarly primed, whether Wesley should converse with her. The reply was: “Only in the presence of Mr. Delamotte.”

Wesley doubtlessly derived a profound gratification from the tremendous sacrifice he was making, for he indited a pæan: “I saw and adored the goodness of God, though what He required of me was a costly sacrifice. It was indeed the giving up at once whatever this world affords of agreeable—not only honor, fortune, power (which indeed were nothing to me, who despised them as the clay in the streets), but all the truly desirable conveniences of life—a pleasant house, a delightful garden on the brow of a hill at a small distance from the town, another house and garden in the town, and a third a few miles off, with a large tract of fruitful land adjoining to it.” (Causton would have provided these.) “And, above all, what to me made all things else vile and utterly beneath a thought, such a companion as I never expected to find again, should I live one thousand years twice told. So that I could not but cry out: ‘O Lord God, Thou God of my fathers, plenteous in mercy and truth, behold I give Thee, not thousands of rivers of oil, but the desire of my eyes, the joy of my heart, the one thing upon earth which I longed for.’ ”

The Oracle had forbidden him to talk with her alone, but had not forbidden it in the presence of Delamotte. He kept on seeing Sophia at devotional

meetings. He was incapable of severing the bond that held him to the girl. He continued to compose resolutions, but he knew that "under another shock of temptation they would entirely break in sunder as a thread of tow that had been touched by the fire." Suddenly he was awakened as if by a clap of thunder.

He was visiting Sophia's aunt, Mrs. Causton.

"Sir," said that lady, "Mr. Causton and I are exceedingly obliged to you for all the pains you have taken about Sophy. And so is Sophy too; and she desires you would publish the banns of marriage between her and Mr. Williamson on Sunday."

Silence.

"You don't seem to be well pleased," continued Sophia's aunt kindly. "Have you any objection to it?"

"Madam, I don't seem to be awake," replied Wesley, "surely I am in a dream!"

Mrs. Causton assured him he was awake. Mr. Williamson had called the preceding evening, after Wesley's departure. Mr. Causton had given his consent. Still, if Mr. Wesley had "any objection," he could speak. Why didn't he go and see Sophia herself? She was in the "lot." She will be very glad to hear anything Mr. Wesley has to say.

Mrs. Causton's anxiety to have him speak to Sophia and her repeated remarks about his obvious distress, however, aroused Wesley's suspicions.

"Either she is engaged or not," he reasoned. "If

she is, I would not have her if I might; if not, there is nothing in this show which ought to alter my preceding resolution." In other words, if Sophia did not want him he did not want her; and if she wanted him there was no hurry.

Sophia, it appears, had actually engaged herself to Williamson conditionally—"if Mr. Wesley had no objection." Had Wesley realized this he would, he admits, have incurred any loss rather than that she should have run the hazard of losing both her body and soul in hell. William Williamson was not a devout man.

Wesley found Sophia in the "lot" and remarked he could not believe the news unless he heard it from her lips.

She replied: "Sir, I have given Mr. Williamson my consent unless you have anything to object."

The thought flashed through his mind: "What if she means, 'unless you will marry me'?"

What else could she have meant?

But his sophistry was at hand to help him. He said to himself:

"Miss Sophy is so sincere, if she meant so, she would say so!"

He answered sadly: "If you have given your consent, the time is past. I have nothing to object." He was overcome by emotion.

As soon as he could speak, he reminded her of a promise she had made that if she married at all it

would be none but a religious man. Was Williamson such? She had no proof to the contrary! That was not enough; she ought to have positive proof. She pleaded: "I no otherwise consented than if you had nothing to object."

Wesley went home utterly miserable. God had let loose His "inordinate affections" upon him. The poison thereof drank up his spirit. "To see her no more, that thought was as the piercings of a sword; it was not to be borne nor shaken off. I was weary of the world, of light, of life." He could not pray. He had forsaken God, now God forsook him! "Then indeed the snares of death were about me; the pains of hell overtook me."

Sophia came as usual to prayers in the evening, and he spoke to her while Williamson walked impatiently to and fro in front of the house. He reminded her of a promise once given not to take any important step without consulting him.

"Why, what could I do?" she pleaded. "I can't live in that house. I can't bear these shocks. This is quite a sudden thing. I have no particular inclination for Mr. Williamson. I only promised if no objection appeared. But what can I do?"

What did Wesley expect?

Two days later Sophia and Williamson set out for Purrysburg and were married, four days after the engagement and exactly one year from the day Wesley first spoke to Sophia.

March 9. 1873.

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TRANSLITERATION OF CIPHER BY NEHEMIAH CURNOCK, EDITOR
OF THE STANDARD EDITION OF JOHN WESLEY'S JOURNAL

MARCH 9 AND 10, 1737

- 4 Private prayer, prayer, diary, $\frac{3}{4}$ private prayer.
- 5 Meditation, Prayer.
- 6 Coffee, conversed, $\frac{1}{2}$ Clement.
- 7 Within with Mrs. Ann, $\frac{3}{4}$ with Mrs. Bush.
- 8 Within, $\frac{1}{2}$ Clement.
- 9 Clement $1\frac{3}{4}$ logic.
- 10 Mrs. Causton's in talk with her. Miss Sophy to be married;
meditation.
- 12 At the Lot, within with her, quite distressed.
 - 1 Within, Confounded!
 - 2 Took leave of her, $\frac{1}{2}$ at home. Could not pray.
 - 3 Tried to pray, lost, sunk!
 - 4 Bread, conversed with Delamotte. Little better!
 - 5 Mr. Causton came, in talk, tea.
 - 6 Kempis; Germans. Easier!
 - 7 Prayers.
 - 8 Miss Sophy et cetera, $\frac{1}{2}$ within with her, $\frac{3}{4}$ with Delamotte,
prayer.

No such day since I first saw the sun!

O deal tenderly with Thy servant!

Let me not see such another!

(Notes: The figures on the left refer to the hour of the day, the fractions in the text are parts of hours— $\frac{1}{2}$ at home, means he was at home for half an hour. Clement refers to the author he was reading; logic, the subject he tried to study.)

Wesley by no means dropped his interest in Sophia. About a week after her marriage he accused her of ingratitude and she told him after communion that her husband objected to his speaking to her because it made her "uneasy." Wesley could not get her out of his head. He wrote a history of the romance and read it to Sophia's friend, Mrs. Burnside. He wrote to his brother Samuel about it and received the characteristically Wesleyan reply: "I am sorry you are disappointed in one match, because you are unlikely to find another." He was worried about Sophia's religious state; advised her through Mrs. Burnside. He could not sleep. He visited the Caustons and talked to her. "In things of an indifferent nature," he told her, "you cannot be too obedient to your husband; but if his will should be contrary to the will of God you are to obey God rather than man."

Next day, when they met in the street, she told him that her husband objected to his conversation with her not because it made her "uneasy" but because it made her "too strict." That definitely aligned Williamson on the side against God. Wesley began to have doubts whether he ought to admit Mrs. Williamson to communion until she had in some manner or other "owned her fault and declared her repentance." The fault of which he accused her was lack of candor at the time of her engagement to Williamson; but as confirmation of her fallen state he was informed that she had left off fasting, neglected all the morning

prayers, though still acknowledging her obligation to do both—which made a wide difference between her neglect and that of others.

He had now definitely identified his own grievance with God's. He was obsessed by the case of God *vs.* Mrs. Williamson. He put it in writing, discussed it with the Moravians. The ritualist and logician was aroused. He strove to make his brief of the case unanswerable. Then suddenly an unexpected witness turned up against Sophia.

It was a Mrs. Brownfield who came to the pastor's rescue. Sophia had never been honest with him, she proved; for at the very time when he had believed her to be heart-free, when she had assured him she cared no more for Mellichamp, she had told Mrs. Brownfield she loved the scamp as much as ever. That was while Mellichamp was serving one of his terms in gaol. Sophia had come to Mrs. Brownfield, crying: "I am ruined! They have put Tommy in gaol again."

Wesley uttered a cry of triumph.

"God showed me yet more of the greatness of my deliverance," he wrote, "by opening to me a new and unexpected scene of Miss Sophy's relation [her part in the affair]. Oh, never give me over to my own heart's desires, nor let me follow my own imaginations!"

The case against Sophia was complete.

Delamotte, however, advised caution.

Wesley now spoke to the Caustons of his intention to exclude Mrs. Williamson from Holy Communion. He had the right to do so by the rules of the church if she had proved delinquent in ritualistic regularity. Mrs. Causton, a shrewd woman, advised him first to write his reasons to Sophia. This he did in a remarkable letter, which, omitting a few introductory paragraphs was as follows:

In your present behaviour, I dislike: (1) your neglect of half the public service, which no man living can compel you to; (2) your neglect of fasting, which you once knew to be a help to the mind without any prejudice to the body; (3) your neglect of half the opportunity of communicating which you have lately had. But these things are small in comparison of what I dislike in your past behaviour, for, (1) you told me over and over you had entirely conquered your inclination for Mr. Mellichamp, yet at that very time you had not conquered it; (2) you told me frequently you had no design to marry Mr. Williamson, yet at the very time you spoke you had the design; (3) in order to conceal both these things from me, you went through a course of deliberate dissimulation. Oh how fallen! How changed! Surely there was a time when in Miss Sophy's life there was no guile.

Own these facts, and own your fault and you will be in my thoughts as if they had never been. If you are otherwise minded, I shall still be your friend, though I cannot expect you should be mine.

No confession of guilt, no sign of repentance, followed. After waiting a month, Wesley carried out his

threat and "expelled" Mrs. Williamson from communion.

The next day a warrant was issued by the recorder of Savannah for the arrest of John Wesley on the complaint of William Williamson for defaming his wife Sophia and for refusing without cause in a public congregation to administer to her the sacrament. Her uncle, Causton, demanded that Wesley state the reasons for his action before all the people. Wesley refused on the ground that (1) *all* the people were not proper judges in ecclesiastical matters; (2) he was unwilling to expose Mrs. Williamson; (3) he foresaw that Causton might be insulted by the people, for it was common talk in Savannah (which later turned out to be only too well founded) that the keeper of the stores and first magistrate had been careless with the funds entrusted to him by the trustees of the Georgia corporation.

Savannah now hummed. Causton added to the public hilarity by reading extracts from Wesley's letters to Sophia. The Causton family industriously circulated their version of Wesley's motives. Causton's table was free to all—his generosity limited only by the resources of the public stores.

The court that was to act upon Williamson's complaint met on August 22, and the chief magistrate, Causton himself, addressed the grand jury, which consisted of forty-four men, a considerable fraction of the male population of Savannah. Causton ex-

horted his fellow citizens not to allow any person, whoever he might be, to infringe their liberty or usurp an illegal authority over them. An affidavit signed by Mrs. Williamson was read in which she said that she had been entrusted to the care of Wesley by her relations and that after three months he began to try to alienate her affections from them and often, in very pathetic terms, urged her to leave them and live with him, "basely insinuating that she never could make so good a progress to salvation if she lived with them as she could if she lived wholly with him." Finding his arguments futile, he made overtures of marriage, often alleging that he could easily alter anything in his way of life that was disagreeable to her. He would give up his former intentions of going among the Indians if she would have him for a husband. Three days before her marriage to Williamson he had come to her and "urged her much to know whether she had been overpersuaded or forced to agree to said marriage and whether it might not be prevented," again saying he would drop his fastings and other mortifications if she had any dislike to them. Ever since her marriage he had taken every opportunity to force his private discourse upon her, often terrifying her with the danger her soul would be in if she did not continue to spend the time and converse with him as before marriage. And particularly about three months ago he "had followed her to the back door and told her it was necessary for the benefit of her soul she

should still continue to converse with him; that she must not mind what the world said on such an occasion; and that she must contrive some opportunity or proper times for him to converse with her." To this deponent had answered: "She wondered he could desire any such thing when he knew deponent's husband had so often forbidden him and she had so often refused him so to do."

This affidavit is given in Wesley's *Journal*. It is to be presumed that the interpretation put upon his words and actions by Mrs. Williamson's male relatives was carefully framed to support their lawsuit. Williamson demanded damages to the amount of one thousand pounds.

The grand jury by a vote of thirty-two to twelve found a true bill against Wesley. In nine articles of the indictment he was charged with such offenses as changing the time of prayer, the style of baptising, the selection of hymns and other autocratic acts in the church ritual. The tenth article accused him of refusing Mrs. Williamson the sacrament of the Lord's Supper to the great disgrace and hurt of her character.

Wesley's reply was that the matters referred to in nine of the indictments (as to the usages of the church) were none of the court's business, being of a purely ecclesiastical nature. As to the tenth, charging him with talking and writing to Mrs. Williamson

against the will of her husband, he demanded an immediate trial in order that he might have an opportunity of clearing his reputation.

The court was in no hurry to grant Wesley a quick trial, although he asked for one repeatedly. Oglethorpe was in England, and it was now rumored that the Williamsons were planning to return to England. Delamotte advised Wesley to go also and defend his reputation at home. Wesley consulted the Oracle, and interpreted its response to be "Not yet." His usefulness in Savannah was ended; his prestige was gone; but he never let up in his work—frenzied activity, it might be designated, were it not so minutely planned and so methodically carried out. His Sunday program started with English prayers from five to half past six in the morning. At nine he read prayers to a few Italians in their own language. From half past ten to half past twelve a sermon was delivered in English, followed by Holy Communion. At one there was a service for the French, including prayers, psalms and Scripture exposition. He catechized children at two. There was a third English service at three, followed by a meeting in his house for Scripture reading, prayer and song. At six he attended a Moravian service—to learn, not to teach. On Saturday afternoons he went to Highgate, five miles from Savannah, and expounded the Scriptures to some French in their own language. He started a similar

service for the French in Savannah. He began to read prayers and expound (in German) once a week to the Germans of Hampstead.

By November 22 Wesley came to the conclusion, in which he was supported by his friends, that the time had come for him to depart. He posted up a notice in the great square informing the community of his intentions, and requesting those who had any books of his to return them. He was ready on December 2 to start, the tide being favorable, when he was sent for by the court and warned not to leave the province before he had answered the charges against him. The court obviously was actuated by malice, for, as Wesley informed it, he had appeared six or seven times for the purpose of answering the charges and had not been allowed to do so. The court demanded security that he would appear when called. How much security? The court put its honorable heads together and two hours later reappeared with a document for Wesley to sign whereby he agreed to appear or pay a penalty of fifty pounds. Williamson demanded separate bail.

Wesley replied: "I will give you neither any bond nor any bail at all. You know your business, and I know mine."

The court thereupon posted a notice requiring all officers and sentinels to prevent Wesley's leaving the province and forbidding any person to assist him. "I now saw clearly," writes Wesley, "the hour was

come for me to fly for my life, leaving this place, and as soon as evening prayers were over, about eight o'clock, the tide then serving, I shook off the dust of my feet, and left Georgia, having preached the Gospel there with much weakness indeed and many infirmities, not as I ought but as I was able one year and nearly nine months."

With three companions Wesley set out in a small boat and landed at Purrysburg, twenty miles north of Savannah. The personnel of his crew is significant — a barber, a constable and a tithingman, all three fugitives from their creditors or their families: "They were men," says Patrick Tailfer, the contemporary Savannah historian, "who abhorred regular work but loved to stir up sedition and revolt."

From Purrysburg they travelled on foot across a large swamp and through almost impenetrable thickets. One whole day they tasted no food but the fragments of a gingercake that had been given to Wesley, with half a pint of rum, by a kind woman. They had to dig for water. Obviously they had left in great haste. The night was cold and they lay on the ground, close together for warmth. Wesley slept soundly. After three days they reached Port Royal, whence they proceeded by water, spending four days in an open boat and reaching Charleston cold and hungry on December 13.

Wesley was received at Charleston with respect and invited by the minister to preach in his church.

After a week's rest he sailed for England. He took up his regular occupation on shipboard—holding morning and evening services, reading, expounding and writing. He taught two negro lads the principles of Christianity. During a storm he spoke to his fellow passengers about their "eternal interests," but his *Journal* indicates that he was profoundly disturbed. The depths of his soul had been turned up in the passionate turmoil at Savannah. The old Wesley had been shattered. A new Wesley was struggling to be born.

"I went to America," he wrote in his diary, "to convert the Indians, but oh! who shall convert me? I have a fair summer religion. I can talk well, nay, and believe myself while no danger is near. But let death look me in the face and my spirit is troubled. Oh, who will deliver me from this fear of death? This then have I learned in the ends of the earth, that I am fallen short of the glory of God, that my whole heart is altogether corrupt and abominable, and consequently my whole life. Alienated as I am from the life of God, I am a child of wrath, an heir of hell."

v

BELIEF

UP to the time when he left Georgia, Wesley had put his trust in the Bible and the sacraments of the church. His goal was holiness, a sterilized state in which one did no harm, went often to church, prayed often, visited the poor and the criminal and preserved one's soul spotless and genteel. At Oxford as well as in Georgia he had relied greatly upon resolutions. When dissatisfied with himself he wrote a resolution or a set of resolutions in his diary. The following significant entry is from an Oxford diary:

1. To labour after continual seriousness, not willingly indulging myself in any the least levity of behaviour, or in laughter, no, not for a moment.
2. To use absolute openness and unreserve with all I should converse with.
3. To speak no word which does not tend to the glory of God; in particular, not to talk of worldly things. Others may, nay, must.
4. To take no pleasure which does not tend to the glory of God; thanking God every moment for all I do take, and, therefore, rejecting every sort and degree of it which I feel I cannot thank Him in and for.

Minute examination of his conscience and the details of his conduct was then occupying his mind. He had afflicted the rowdy Georgia colonists with his demands for frequent communion, early morning prayers and fasts and hoped to save his soul and theirs by strict observance of the church rites. "We are not Catholics," one of his parishioners had protested angrily, but Wesley was inflexible.

The affair with Sophia Hopkey brought the whole system down with a crash. Sailing homeward over a calm sea Wesley was beset by neurotic fears, by unaccountable apprehensions of he knew not what dangers. He then wrote that remarkable passage quoted on page 78 "Oh, who will deliver me from this fear of death?"

Fourteen years later when his enemies cited those words (which he had allowed to appear in his published *Journal*) against him he protested that it was unfair to use "what was writ in the anguish of my heart, to which I gave vent between God and my soul." But the significance of this outburst consists precisely in its having been unpremeditated and uncensored.

Wesley had an immense will to believe, but up to the age of thirty-four, the year of his return from Georgia, he still felt the need of a master belief which should be with him in all his thoughts. It was for that he had gone to Georgia. Officially sent as minister to the colonists and missionary to the Indians, the

motive in his heart was to acquire that priceless treasure which he lacked.

"I went to Georgia to save my soul," he wrote. "I hoped to learn the true Gospel of Christ by preaching it to the heathen. They have no comments to construe away the text; no vain philosophy to corrupt it; no luxurious, sensual, covetous, ambitious expounders to soften its unpleasant truths. They are as little children, humble, willing to learn and eager to do the will of God, and consequently they shall know of every doctrine I preach, whether it be of God. By these, therefore, I hope to learn the purity of that faith which was once delivered to the saints, the genuine sense and full extent of those laws which none can understand who mind earthly things."

He never had an opportunity to try out the Gospel on the Indians of Georgia. Only a slight acquaintance with them had convinced him that his conception of their childlike simplicity was illusory. His references to the American aborigines after his return to England were always exceedingly unflattering.

Wesley was determined to get faith because he needed it. His mind, he tells us, sometimes ran upon thoughts like the following: "What if the generations of men be exactly parallel with the generation of leaves, if the earth drop its successive inhabitants, just as the tree drops its leaves? What if that saying of a great man be really true: Post mortem nihil est,

et ipsa mors nihil—Death is nothing and nothing is after death. How am I sure that this is not the case? That I have not followed cunningly devised fables? And I have pursued the thought till there was no spirit in me, and I was ready to choose strangling rather than life."

Wesley had hardly been a week in England when he met Peter Böhler, a Moravian missionary sent out from Herrnhut to do what he could to convert the English to the one true religion—that of the Moravians. Although ten years younger than Wesley, Böhler exercised a remarkable influence upon Wesley's mind. A society of Englishmen had been formed to whom Böhler preached the Moravian doctrines, chief of which was salvation by faith.

Wesley's interest in the Moravians dated from that day on board the *Simmonds* when he heard their hymns amid the roar of the hurricane mingled with the screams of the terrified English colonists. Throughout his Georgia sojourn he had sought them out and clung to them in the hope of learning their secret.

Immediately upon landing in England Wesley had resumed his habit of preaching. He was aware that he spoke without conviction, and it troubled him. He asked Böhler about it. Ought he to go on preaching if he did not have faith? Böhler's reply was a curious anticipation of William James. "Preach faith," he answered "*till* you have it; and then *because* you have

it, you will preach faith." This exactly suited Wesley's pragmatic temper. A homely practicality, a persistent bending of theory to experience was characteristic of Wesley's adventure in theology.

He tells us later in his career that "the devil once infused into my mind a temptation that, perhaps, I did not believe what I was preaching. 'Well then,' said I, 'I will preach it till I do.' 'But,' the devil suggested, 'what if it should not be true?' 'Still,' I replied 'I will preach it because whether true or not it must be pleasing to God, by preparing men better for another world.' 'But what if there should be no other world?' rejoined the enemy. 'I will go on preaching it,' said I, 'because it is the way to make them happier and better in this.' "

It was an essential part of the Moravian doctrine of salvation by faith that the transformation in the soul of the penitent, styled by them "rebirth," took place in an instant. Wesley, almost in the spirit of Hume, requested to be shown evidence of the fact, and Böhler produced several witnesses, Englishmen who had been instantaneously reborn. It was the inner urge to believe, however, not the witnesses, that finally brought about Wesley's conversion. The long sought spiritual cataclysm occurred on May 24, 1738, a day that, in the opinion of Lecky, "marks an epoch in English history."

There were premonitory symptoms on the morning of that day when, opening his Bible at random for

guidance, Wesley read: "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature." Again, before leaving the house, he opened the Sacred Book and the startlingly pertinent words "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God" met his eyes.

Wesley describes his rebirth as follows: "In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's "Preface to the Epistle to the Romans." About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that he had taken away *my* sins, even *mine*, and saved *me* from the law of sin and death. I began to pray with all my might, for those who had in a more especial manner despitefully used me and persecuted me. I then testified openly to all, what I now first felt in my heart."

The members of the society at Aldersgate Street joyfully marched Wesley to the lodgings of his brother Charles, who was recovering from a dangerous illness, sang a hymn and parted with a prayer. The expected bliss did not, however, come to Wesley at once. "This cannot be faith," whispered the enemy, "for where is thy joy?" Wesley nevertheless went forth resolutely preaching faith and, as Böhler had foretold, his faith grew as he preached it.

Men might be classified according to their capacity to believe. Some are confident and positive by nature; others vacillating and neutral. There is ground for thinking that belief is conditioned by the body, since certain drugs cause diffidence and hesitation, while others, like alcohol, nitrous oxide and ether, induce aggressive confidence.

Wesley was of the tribe of believers—doubt was painful to him. “My brother,” said Charles Wesley, “was, I believe, born for the benefit of knaves. He trusted everybody and he was often imposed upon.”

Wesley’s progenitors for several generations on both sides had been believers; that is, clergymen. A sufficient explanation of his mental habits in this respect may be found, however, in the impressions he received early in life from his remarkable mother. She it was who, it will be remembered, wrote in her diary the resolution to be particularly careful of John’s soul so miraculously restored to her from the burning rectory. Years later, as Wesley was holding a watch-night service it came into his mind “that this was the very day and hour (11 p. m., February 9) in which forty years ago I was taken out of the flames. I stopped and gave a short account of that wonderful Providence.” He had caused a burning house to be engraved under one of his portraits with the words: “Is not this a brand plucked out of the burning?”

The Wesleys at Epworth had a ghost (said to be the best authenticated ghost in history) visiting them

for two months in 1726. The whole Wesley family, with the exception of Samuel, the eldest son, believed in it. John was at the time of this visitation a pupil at Charterhouse School, but received full reports from the family describing the lifting of latches by unseen hands, the rattling of windows, the moving of dishes; footsteps heard on stairs and groans in vacant rooms, the weird whistling of the wind around the house and the dog's howling and trembling. Rapping signals on floors and walls kept the family in a state of fear and excitement. "If thou be the spirit of my son Sammy," called the old man, "knock three times and no more," but a significant silence indicated that no evil had befallen Sammy. Unable to get rid of the goblin, the Wesleys adopted it and humorously referred to it as "Old Jeffrey." Old Jeffrey, John Wesley believed, was an emissary of Satan sent to punish the rector of Epworth for having ridden off to London fifteen years before, swearing that if his wife and he had two kings they must have two beds. Susanna had refused to say "Amen" to his prayer for the Prince of Orange, newly elected king of England. The king's opportune death, it should be added, a few months later, providentially released the fiery clergyman from his rash vow.

In the course of his subsequent journeyings about the British Isles, Wesley was told many a portentous tale of omens, witchcraft, ghosts and demoniac possession. He eagerly treasured up these stories, retold

them in his letters and in his *Journal*, adding choice bits from his own experience. He puts on record, for instance, that on October 26, 1786, a dog howling under his window in a most uncommon manner could not be quieted—"Just then William B—— died."

Wesley was sorry that most Englishmen had given up the belief in witchcraft. "I willingly take this opportunity of entering my solemn protest," he wrote, "against the violent compliment which so many that believe the Bible pay to those that do not believe it. With my last breath will I bear testimony against giving up to infidels one great proof of the invisible world. The giving up of witchcraft is the giving up of the Bible."

Some of his auditors at the height of the revival lost their reason, became hysterical, cursed, shrieked, prayed and sang uncontrollably. Wesley's explanation was that demons were tormenting the poor sinners and making most of the noise. "The plain case is she is tormented by an evil spirit," he said of a woman in an epileptic fit: "yea, try all your drugs over and over again but at length it will appear this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." Angels and demons, he believed, swarm about the race of man, the former sedulously endeavoring to repair the damage wrought by the latter. Disease, accidents, nightmares, storms and earthquakes were to him evidences of diabolical activity.

His rescue from the burning parsonage at the age

of six was the beginning of a long series of special providences by which, Wesley believed, he was guided and guarded during his life. The elements took orders from him. The sun, the rain, the wind, animate and inanimate nature were enlisted to preserve John Wesley from inconvenience and harm. He records in his *Journal*, April 24, 1755: "Just as I began to preach the sun broke out and shone exceedingly hot on the side of my head. I found if it continued I should not be able to speak long, and lifted my heart up to God. In a minute or two it was covered with clouds, which continued till the service was over. Let any who please call this chance; I call it prayer." Again, on June 2, 1758, he tells how the wind kept off the rain while he was preaching, but as soon as he was through the rain began again. On June 8, 1763, the rain began just as he started to preach, "but it stopped in two or three minutes, I am persuaded, in answer to the prayer of faith; incidents of the same kind I have seen abundance of times; and they are nothing strange to those who sincerely believe 'the very hairs of your head are all numbered.'" His carriage was stoned by a mob but no stone reached him, for by providential arrangement "a very large gentlewoman sat in my lap and screened me so that nothing came near me." Another time his head ached and his horse was lame—"I thought 'Cannot God heal either man or beast by any means or without means?' Immediately my headache ceased and my horse's lame-

ness in the same instant." He was not always able to cure his horse so easily. He then philosophized: "The old murderer [the devil] is restrained from hurting me, but he has power over my horse." When his horse runs away the devil has been up to his old tricks; when the horse stops it is God, or his angels, that has interposed.

In October, 1743, he was crossing the River Trent in a storm when the ferry, bearing six men, two women and three horses, began to fill with water. Horses and men rolled over one another, but Wesley lay calmly in the bottom of the boat sure of his ability to swim ashore. The situation became extremely perilous until the three horses, moved (we are to suppose) by a religious impulse, leaped overboard and lightened the boat. Wesley still remaining motionless where he lay, it was found that a large iron bar which had been pushed through the string of his boot held him down, so that he certainly would have drowned had not the three horses taken to the water.

Believing that the invisible God and His angels stood perpetual guard over him, Wesley confronted hostile mobs with amazing coolness. It was his nerve, no doubt, that saved him on October 17, 1743, from a dangerous mob near Wednesbury. He notes in his *Journal* the various moments at which supernatural agencies intervened that night on his behalf: (1) While they were rushing him down on a slippery path, they tried to throw him, thinking that, once on

the ground, he would be unable to rise. But he did not once stumble or make the least slip. (2) Although many tried to grasp his clothes in order to drag him down they could not take hold. (3) A lusty man just behind struck at him several times with a large oaken stick, one blow from which would have cracked his skull. "But every time the blow was turned aside, I know not how; for I could not move to the right hand or the left."

That guiding providence which preserved him from injury directed him also, he believed, in making momentous decisions. The medium through which the Divine will acted upon his own when simple prayer gave no certain cue was the Bible. He manipulated the book as an Oracle, reading his answer in the first sentence on the page to which he opened at random. An extraordinary instance of this occurred when he was invited by Whitefield to take his place at Bristol, where Whitefield had begun open-air preaching (Whitefield was leaving for America):

"Get thee up into this mountain" was the first sentence that met Wesley's eyes. That plainly meant "Go!" He opened the book again, and read: "And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days." The passing of a beloved leader! Then again, "And devout men carried Stephen *to his burial*, and made great lamentation for him." A distinct call to martyrdom! Charles Wesley now consulted the Oracle for his brother, and read:

"Son of man, behold I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke: yet neither shalt thou mourn or weep, neither shall thy tears run down." Sacrifice! The brethren of the Moravian society in Fetter Lane were called upon to ask for him and ask again. At last came the sentence that stilled all doubt in Wesley's mind: "And he slept with his fathers and they buried him in the city, even in Jerusalem." The research was ended. Wesley set out for Bristol.

SALVATION BY FAITH

THE doctrine of salvation by faith which Wesley preached shocked the prelates and good church people of his day as if he were exhibiting religion naked to the world. Aristocracy instinctively shrank from a conception which gave no advantage at the throne of grace to an archbishop over a sinner. The drunkard and the wastrel by taking one step could, according to this teaching, place themselves at the side of those who had been all their lives diligent in good works. That step was simply the act of faith. It seemed as if Wesley were democratizing salvation by making it easy.

Salvation by faith, as it is commonly understood, seems just as nonsensical in 1927 as in 1727. The authoritative definition of faith in the New Testament (Hebrews II. 1) does not commend it to the intelligence: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." The trained Biblical student perhaps knows what this means. To the ordinary reader it conveys no clear idea.

What Wesley meant by salvation and faith, however, is as clear as the sun, and he meant exactly

what modern psychologists mean when they discuss analogous mental phenomena in a more scientific terminology.

“By salvation,” wrote Wesley, “I mean not merely deliverance from hell or going to heaven but a present deliverance from sin; a restoration of the soul to its primitive health, its original purity; a recovery of the Divine nature; the renewal of our souls after the image of God in righteousness and true holiness in justice, mercy and truth.”

The common understanding of salvation is that it is a prize to be awarded in a future life to those who have believed in certain unproved miracles. That was not at all Wesley’s idea. Faith, in his conception, *is* salvation. The moment a man has faith he is freed from doubt and fear, from sin and vicious desires. The love of God fills his heart. Faith, as Wesley meant it, is not belief in this or that fact—that Jesus rose from the dead; that He walked on the water; that He turned water into wine—but love of Jesus. It is, in short, that profound emotional activity which psychologists have designated by the word “identification.” Examine for a moment the significance of this word. It is the key that unlocks the secret of all religious mysticism.

“Identification” includes many of the phenomena generally grouped under the name of sympathy. The parent identifies himself with the child, lives its life, suffers and rejoices with it. The reader of a romance

identifies himself with the hero, lives with him through a series of astonishing adventures, falls in love with the heroine and is himself the hero who wins her. The gallery witnessing a melodrama lives on the stage, agonizes, is rescued and plays the part of the rescuer all at the same time. The hero-worshipper watches the triumphal progress of his idol through the streets and mystically drinks in the applause of cheering crowds. The Old Guard faces death that the general may taste the joy of victory. The poor laborer casting his ballot for his leader enjoys the leader's satisfaction in receiving an "overwhelming majority." When Wesley spoke of faith he meant an identification of this sort with Christ.

This, strange to say, is precisely the meaning attached to the word "faith" by Paul. It was also what Luther meant, and Luther's rediscovery was the chief cause of the Reformation. The psychological phenomenon described by Paul, Luther and Wesley is not confined to religious circles, but is common to men of every degree of culture, whether Christians or Hot-tentots. In its extreme forms it comes under the daily observation of the psychopathologist, and indeed to most men the religious mystic seems partly or wholly mad. Faith and love are one, and it is a curious fact that this identity first sighted by Paul, the religious genius, should now be urged in what seems to many so grotesque a way by the scientific genius, Freud. Faith and charity in Freud's lexicon are "eros."

Wesley believed he had narrowly escaped the bog of mysticism. He had been, he admitted, under its spell for a time at Oxford. There he had studied a famous old book of Luther's time entitled "Theologia Germanica," in which the supremacy of love, the blessedness of internal religion and of purity were powerfully commended. He had plunged into devotional books like Thomas à Kempis's "Imitation of Christ" and William Law's "Christian Perfection" and "Serious Call." The immediate effect of these studies was to make him determine to consecrate himself, body, soul and substance, to God. He resolved to acquire the mind which was in Christ—not some part of that mind but all of it. He set himself to "walk as he walked, not only in many or most respects, but in all things."

Wesley thought he had outgrown mysticism, but he never did outgrow it. True, he speaks disparagingly of some of the mystics, of Behmen's "sublime nonsense," but he is quick to add that he does not reject the "gold" of mysticism, and in his Christian Library, the five-foot bookshelf stocked with works every Methodist should read, he included the "Homilies" of Macarius, the Egyptian mystic who wrote of the Christian's mind as the throne of God. His ideal Methodist is one that has "the love of God shed abroad in his heart, of the Holy Ghost given unto him," . . . "one who loves the Lord his God with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his

strength," one whose soul is constantly crying out, "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? There is none upon earth that I desire but Thee. My God and my all! Thou art the strength of my heart and my portion forever!"

In one of his controversial articles Wesley referred to one of the hymns in "Hymns and Sacred Poems," a collection signed by himself and Charles, to prove that his idea of salvation, or perfection, had always been the same. Here are the last three stanzas of this hymn:

Come, O my Saviour, come away!
 Into my soul descend!
No longer from thy creature stay,
 My author and my end.

The bliss thou hast for me prepared,
 No longer be delayed!
Come my exceeding great reward,
 For whom I first was made.

Come Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
 And seal me thine abode.
Let all I am in thee be lost!
 Let all be lost in God!

Wesley shows by a number of expressions a fixation (to use a technical term) not merely to live in agreement with the moral principles laid down by

Jesus but to repeat in his own life the personal experiences of his Lord—to be, it might be said, Jesus over again. He writes to his friend Harvey, who had criticised him for bringing reproach upon himself by preaching in other clergymen's parishes and exciting people to fits:

“The more evil men say of me for my Lord's sake, the more good He will do by me. O my friend, my heart is moved toward you! I fear Satan, transformed into an angel of light, hath assaulted you, and prevailed also! I fear that offspring of hell, worldly or mystic prudence, has drawn you away from the simplicity of the Gospel! How else could you ever conceive, that the being reviled and *hated of all men*, should make us less fit for our Master's service? How else could you ever think of saving yourself and them that hear you, without being the *filth* and *off-scouring of the world*? To this hour is this Scripture true; and I therein rejoice, yea, and will rejoice. Blessed be God, I enjoy the reproach of Christ! Oh, may you also be vile, exceeding vile, for His sake. God forbid that you should ever be other than generally scandalous—I had almost said universally. If any man tell you there is a new way of following Christ, *he is a liar and the truth is not in him.*”

The fixation of repeating in his own life the events of Christ's life is clear again in his reports of some of the mob episodes. When they brought him (Oct. 19, 1763) before a magistrate at Wednesbury, he

reports the judge as saying: "What have I to do with Mr. Wesley? Carry him home." In his summary of the miraculous features of the mobbing, he remarks that "they were equally at a loss what to do with me, none proposing any determinate thing. The cry of most was 'Away with him, away with him!' Of others, 'Kill him at once!' But none so much as once mentioned how; only one or two (I almost tremble to relate it) screamed out (with what meaning I cannot tell) : 'Crucify the dog, crucify him!'"

The Pauline echo in the following introduction of a letter to Zinzendorf is obvious:

"To the church of God which is in Herrnhuth, John Wesley, an unworthy presbyter of the Church of God in England, wisheth all grace and peace in our Lord Jesus Christ, Glory be to God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! for giving me to be an eye-witness of your faith and love and holy conversation in Christ Jesus. We are endeavoring here to be followers of you as you are of Christ," and so on.

But we are little concerned with Wesley's formal theological views. We are interested in the spiritual event, the moral stress, for which Wesley's doctrine was a rationalization. In thus avoiding theological technicalities we have his own approval and example:

"I will not quarrel with you about my opinion," he writes; "only see that your heart is right toward God, that you know and love the Lord Jesus Christ,

that you love your neighbor, and walk as your master walked, and I desire no more. I am sick of opinions; am weary to bear them; my soul loathes this frothy food. Give me solid and substantial religion; give me a humble, gentle lover of God and man; a man full of mercy and good faith, without partiality and without hypocrisy; a man laying himself out in the work of faith, the patience of hope, the labour of love. Let my soul be with these Christians wheresoever they are, and whatsoever opinion they are of."

A man like Paul necessarily describes his soul-experiences in the terms in which he has been educated. Formal followers, official disciples, not having had the experience, spend their lives trying to re-discover by minute analysis of words the master's meaning. At long intervals a kindred spirit, ignoring the verbiage, restates in a language that for the moment seems altogether new the living truth. Such a man was Wesley. Sitting alone in his coach as he did many hours every day, he reflected that a man might be saved who had never heard the words "justification by faith," or even formed the conception of the thing meant, but did possess the thing, namely, faith, itself. "Is it not high time for us to throw aside big bombastic words," he exclaims, "and to return to the plain word 'He that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him'?"

The effect of "salvation" upon Wesley, as on Luther, was to set him on fire to teach the truth to

all mankind. From the ritualist that he had been, the moral watchman in the service of the church, he became a flaming preacher, kindling other preachers as well as multitudes of plain men. He preached to every one he met at inns, in parlors, on the highways. And, curiously enough, it was for preaching this ancient Pauline doctrine of faith that the churches were closed to him and he and his followers were insulted, mobbed, stoned and sometimes hunted like mad dogs.

This very teaching, however, captured the working people of England—the miners, the fishermen, the weavers, the spinners, the foundrymen, the laborers of the cities, all of whom he sought out rather than the prosperous.

It was hard to be shallow enough for a polite audience, he wrote. "But I love the poor; in many of them I find pure genuine grace unmixed with paint, folly, and affectation." The poor responded. They venerated and idolized him, as if he had indeed come out of an earthly paradise, which he could have enjoyed all his life, to show them the way to heaven.

FEAR

OVER and over again one catches Wesley watching for signs of fear in himself, and when he finds none, exulting over his conquest. Obviously a brave man he had throughout a great part of his life a strange terror of death, and a fear lest he should, through some error, lose his soul. His peculiar sensitiveness to mortality finds expression in the introduction to his printed sermons:

“To candid, reasonable men I am not afraid to lay open what have been the innermost thoughts of my heart. I have thought, I am a creature of a day, passing through life, as an arrow through the air. I am a spirit come from God, and returning to God; just hovering over the great gulf; till a few moments hence, I am no more seen! I drop into an unchangeable eternity! I want to know one thing, the way to Heaven; how to land safe on that happy shore.”

Salvation meant to Wesley emancipation from fear—fear of death and fear of sin. He moved his audiences by first arousing the same fears in them and then showing the means of deliverance. Hell was so real to Wesley that when he spoke of it he seemed

to be only describing as an honest traveller what his eyes had beheld. He quoted in support of his belief that hell is an actual place: "Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, fear him." Some good souls have doubted whether the Gospel meant an actual blaze, a material fire. What is an immaterial fire? demands Wesley scornfully. You might as well talk about immaterial earth or immaterial water! Contradictions in terms! No fire can burn on eternally, say others. Perhaps not here on earth, but it is different in hell. The torments of hell will go on without intermission, infinitely varied by cunning devils, forever! Do you realize, sinner, what forever means? demands Wesley. No merciful lapses into unconsciousness will give you brief respite there. No fainting, no sleep; but for millions of years, millions of ages, you will be kept awake while you roast in hell fire!

"What is any pain of the body which you do or may endure," asks Wesley in concluding one of his sermons, "to that of lying in a lake of fire burning with brimstone? What is any pain of mind, any fear, anguish, sorrow, compared to the worm that never dieth? That never dieth! This is the sting of all! As for our pains on earth, blessed be God, they are not eternal. There are some intervals to relieve, and there is some period to finish them. When we ask of a friend that is sick how he does, 'I am in pain now,' says he, 'but I hope to be easy soon.' This is

a sweet mitigation of the present uneasiness. But how dreadful would his case be if he should answer 'I am all over pain, and I shall never be eased of it. I lie under exquisite torment of body, and horror of soul; and shall feel it forever?' Such is the case of the damned sinners in hell."

The devastating effect of such a sermon upon his hearers was due partly to the absolute conviction with which it was spoken and partly to the susceptibility of Wesley's audiences to appeals to fear. There was a great deal of latent fear in the congregations of Wesley's time. Fear has to a large extent gone out of fashion, and its abolition has become a principle of hygiene as well as of religion. In Wesley's day the apprehensions of the populace were kept from dying out by a number of circumstances: Wars and rumors of war were scarcely ever absent. From 1739 to 1748 England was engaged in a Spanish war. From 1744 to 1748 she was fighting France. The Seven Years' War from 1756 to 1763 and the war with the American colonies assisted by France from 1774 to 1784 fairly filled out the span of Wesley's career. The machinations of the Pretender, Charles Edward Stuart, filled the country with suspicion. Spies and Popish emissaries were imagined to be lurking in the most unlikely places.

In the middle of the century all Europe was appalled by one of the greatest catastrophes that has occurred in the history of civilization. The greater

part of Lisbon, a city of three hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants, was destroyed by earthquakes, and sixty thousand persons were wiped out in six minutes. London itself felt a series of shocks. The parks and squares were filled with frightened people. A great impression was made upon them by the prophecy of a demented soldier (who was later sent to Bedlam) that half of London would be destroyed on a given date. Tower Hill, Moorfields, Hyde Park and other open places were filled on the designated night with crowds that had fled from their houses for safety. Women made themselves warm "earthquake gowns" in which to sit outdoors. Coaches by the hundreds carried the panic-stricken Londoners to the country.

The churches were also filled. Anglicans, as well as Methodists were sure God was shaking the earth in order to rebuke a more than commonly wicked generation. Whitefield's apocalyptic interpretations delivered at midnight in Hyde Park added to the general demoralization. The Bishop of Oxford preached all night. Sermons, essays, poems and exhortations crowded the air.

At the Methodist headquarters, the Foundery, Charles Wesley preached during the period of the earth shocks to a large audience. As he was giving out his text the building shook violently. Women and children began to scream. "Therefore we will not fear," called out Charles in apt Biblical phrase, "though the earth be moved and the mountains be

carried into the midst of the sea . . . The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge." The earth doggedly oscillated, with a jarring motion and a rumbling as of distant thunder.

A few years later John Wesley was called upon to investigate a strange terrestrial phenomenon in Yorkshire. Whiston Cliff, according to a weaver and a bleacher who were eye-witnesses, had been giving a weird and unseemly performance. Huge masses of rock had flown with a noise like cannon off the top of the cliff. Other great boulders had turned upside down and tumbled from one place to another. Wesley, two months later, was conducted to the scene of the disturbance by the weaver who had observed it.

In the magazine article which Wesley wrote on this remarkable occurrence he asked, How may we account for these phenomena? He tried to show that neither fire, air, nor water could have provided the energy to move such great masses of stone. What then was the effective cause? "What, indeed, but God who arose to shake terribly the earth; who purposely chose such a place [it was near a famous racetrack] where there is so great a concourse of nobility and gentry every year that many might see it and fear."

Wesley and the early Methodists manifested a rather morbid familiarity with death, but one should not forget that death was a much more frequent incident in their lives than it is in the lives of the present generation. Both the death-rate and the birth-rate were

greater than they are now. Many a mother endured agonies similar to Susanna Wesley's, whose nine children died in infancy. Susanna Wesley herself was the twenty-fifth child of Dr. Annesley.

The thinking reader will see in Wesley's reports of the noble bearing and pious last words of children, an echo of the appalling infant mortality of that time. The Methodists tried to see in these tragedies the loving acts of God, and the children, taking their cue from their elders, in many instances heroically played the part expected of them.

Wesley reports a case which he admits might not occur more than once in a century. This girl in her brief existence was scarce ever seen to laugh or heard to utter a light or trifling word. If any of her brothers or sisters spoke angrily to each other she either sharply reproved them or tenderly entreated them to cease. After her health declined she was particularly pleased with hearing the hymn "Abba, Father," sung, and would frequently sing to herself the line "Abba, Father, hear my cry!" "On Monday, April 7," Wesley concludes his account, "without any struggle, she fell asleep, having lived two years and six months."

The case of Richard Hutchinson, also reported by Wesley, throws an interesting light upon early Methodist psychology. Richard was about four years old when he began to talk much of God and to ask questions about Him. He never again played nor laughed but was as serious as an old man of seventy.

He constantly reproved those who cursed, swore or spoke indecently in his hearing. He frequently mourned over his brother, who was two or three years older, saying, "I fear my brother will go to hell, for he does not love God." His hair was cut off as a preventive of smallpox. "I am not afraid to die," he said, "for I love God." A few months later, having sent for all the members of the Methodist society whom he knew, he said good-by to them one by one affectionately. Four days after he fell ill of the smallpox and became delirious. "But all his incoherent sentences," reports Wesley, "were either exhortations or pieces of hymns or prayers. The worse he became the more earnest he was to die, saying 'I must go home; I will go home.' 'You are at home,' said one of the bystanders. 'No; this is not my home; I will go to heaven,' he replied. On the tenth day of the illness he raised himself up and said, 'Let me go to my Father; I will go home.' After which he lay down and died."

Such death scenes caused (to quote the Rev. Luke Tyerman) "triumphant funereal hymns to gush from the poetic soul of Wesley's brother." But Wesley's sister Martha, a balanced woman, objected to such gushings. She particularly criticised a reference in one of the Wesleyan hymns to a corpse as a "lovely appearance" and as "one of the fairest earthly sights." She declared that to look upon a dead body was "like beholding sin upon his throne." Martha shunned all

melancholy topics. But she was a very exceptional Wesleyan!

Of all happy deaths, the happy death of a criminal was most gratifying to the early Methodists. There they saw evidence of another soul snatched from the burning pit; perhaps also proof of a Methodist's gift of persuasion. Those last-hour conversions will not seem inexplicable if we recollect the sort of offenders that were punished by death under the inhuman code then prevailing, persons whom we should now class as petty thieves and first offenders. John Lancaster, for example, had been a regular attendant at the Foundery until he fell into bad company and stole two brass candlesticks from the place of worship. Emboldened by his success in his first attempt, he stole nineteen yards of velvet, but this time was caught and condemned to be hanged. His Methodist friends tried to get him a pardon, but in vain. Up to the last moment of his life the penitent John Lancaster preached, prayed and sang, but Justice was deaf as well as blindfolded.

There was in the prison with John Lancaster, also sentenced to death, Sarah Cunningham who had stolen a purse with twenty-seven guineas. She went mad, but in her lucid moments implored Christ to pity her for her sin. Ten were executed at Tyburn on the same day. Six of these met their fate with transports of joy, which no doubt were in part due to the foulness of the prison from which they were escaping.

"Oh, what a happy night we have had!" they exclaimed on the morning of their execution, and they sang a Methodist hymn on the way to the gallows!

Lamb of God, whose bleeding love
We still recall to mind,
Send the answer from above
And let us mercy find.
Think on us who think on Thee
And every struggling soul release;
O remember Calvary
And let us go in peace.

It was upon malefactors of this caliber in their last hours that Wesley and his associates often prevailed to accept Christ. The condemned had vast need of consolation by whatever means produced.

The curious overemphasis of the Methodists upon the ordeal of dying almost justified the slur flung at them that their religion was a lifelong preparation for the last quarter of an hour of life. They give the impression that their fear of dying is at least as great as their fear of hell. Yet it is demonstrable that for most men there is no last quarter of an hour. Dr. William Osler, in fact, has compiled some statistics showing that men generally have no more pain in dying than in many an illness from which they have recovered. Fear as well as pain is rare. Men generally die as they have lived, wondering, uncertain and, very likely, unconscious.

Epworth, where Wesley's childhood was spent, is situated in the Fen country of England, inhabited in his day by a rough, semi-savage population. The Wesley household had, as has been pointed out, an uncanny familiarity with death, disease, poverty, ghosts and goblins. It is clear that he drew in terror with his mother's milk.

Another source of fear in Wesley was that of which the psychoanalysts have had much to say. It was seen distinctly on board the ship which was bearing him over an unruffled sea back to England. Disastrous love engenders fear. Religion resolves that fear. This phenomenon appears in Wesley not once, but again and again. After the Grace Murray catastrophe he was forced to turn back to the love of Christ; and, at the end of his account of that episode, he wrote:

Teach me, from every pleasing snare,
To keep the Issues of my Heart!
Be Thou my Love, my Joy, my Fear!
Thou my eternal Portion art,
Be Thou my never-failing Friend,
And Love, O love me to the End!"

'Again, we shall see him writing to the much married Sarah Ryan of whom his wife was so madly jealous:

"I cannot think of you without thinking of God. Others often lead me to Him; but it is, as it were, going round about; you bring me straight into His presence."

His unnameable fears, his nostalgia, disappear as soon as he has found some one to love. When God's creature fails him he turns to Christ, and sometimes the two blend into one.

Wesley's superiority to fear as he grew older was therefore all the more remarkable. It was a real conquest. He takes pains to note in his *Journal* when he has been in danger whether he has been afraid or not. He crossed in a small boat in a storm once to Ireland and again to the Isle of Man. He was buffeted and dragged about by angry mobs. He sat helplessly behind a runaway team of horses rushing toward the brink of a precipice at which they stopped (as he believed) by a miracle. In these instances he behaved with absolute coolness. He relished his salvation, which was precisely this freedom from the fear of death, as he repeatedly explained.

When he confronted an audience that did not seem to be afflicted with dreads he did his utmost to stir the dreads up. It was useless to preach to the rich and happy. They did not understand him. But the classes steeped in misery rose gladly to his promise of salvation through faith in Christ.

VIII

SIN

FAITH saved Wesley from sin as well as fear. What did he mean by sin? We have a clue in his own description of his blessed state after the rebirth in 1738. "For I have constant peace; not one uneasy thought. And I have *freedom from sin*; not one unholy desire." Every one knows what ascetics of Wesley's type mean by unholy desire.

Wesley condemned a number of sins by name—swearing, drunkenness, smuggling, bribery, cruelty, disloyalty, luxury, dress. But when he talked about sin without specification he meant unholy desire. He is engaged in the age-old conflict between the spirit and the flesh. The spirit turns toward God; the flesh to the devil.

This is altogether New Testament. The Old Testament moralists denounced plain offenses like murder, idolatry, adultery, thievery, injustice, perjury. For them the path of righteousness was very clear: "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

The Greek even more than the Hebrew was con-

cerned with objective conduct. The Greek word translated as "sin" meant "missing the mark." The mark was in plain view, and if the marksman shot wildly it was not because he was unaware of the direction his arrow should take.

To the pagan mind there is something decadent and corrupt in Christian holiness. This view was vigorously expressed, rather surprisingly, by none other than Theodore Roosevelt (not realizing perhaps on which side he was arguing) in remarks upon the mystic Count Tolstoy. Tolstoy, it will be recalled, when past middle age had come to the same conception of sin that Wesley held in his prime.

"He has some excellent theories," wrote Roosevelt, "and on some points develops a noble and elevated teaching; but taken as a whole and if generally diffused his moral and philosophical teachings would have an influence for bad; partly because on certain points they teach downright immorality, but much more because they tend to be both foolish and fantastic, and if logically applied would mean the extinction of humanity in a generation. 'Kreutzer Sonata' could have come only from a man who, however high he may stand in certain respects, has in him certain dreadful qualities of the moral pervert." "Kreutzer Sonata" is the story of a man who murdered his wife as the result of an obsession that in falling in love with her at an evening party he had committed a fatal sin.

Now, the question arises, what is the reason that unholy desire has this mortal effect upon the saint. And the answer is that for him it means spiritual death. Expressed in his own language sin alienates him from God (or Christ) and from love. He falls under the horror of isolation, *la maladie de l'isolation.*

This interpretation is made clear by Wesley in a letter to one Elizabeth Bennis:

"Nothing is sin strictly speaking but a voluntary transgression of the law of God. Therefore every voluntary breach of the law of love is sin, and nothing else if we speak properly. There may be ten thousand wandering thoughts and forgetful intervals without any breach of love, though not without transgression of the Adamic law. But let love fill your heart, and it is enough."

The law of God, to which Wesley refers, is the love of God primarily, and secondarily of man.

Historically, it is probable that Christianity was a reaction against socially destructive sexual freedom. The reaction pursued divagations from the monogamic ideal into the heart and mind of the individual, raising a horror in pious souls against the first faint stirrings toward forbidden relations. Chastity, however, soon became not a mere abstention, a negative virtue, but an intense love. The perfect Christian in surrendering himself to God's will and to chastity substituted the love of God for the natural love of

human beings. None of the eminent saints led a normal married life. Such a life was incompatible with the kind of love they bestowed upon God and Christ. But on the other hand, the love of God became a substitute for human love, a sublimation, where for one reason or another human love had been frustrated.

This process of sublimation and substitution is found in saintly lives of high and low degree, in strenuous mystics like Saint Theresa and Francis de Sales and in meek, unobserved worshippers in dim church pews. The use of erotic terminology by religious mystics to express their emotions toward God and Christ leaves no doubt that human and divine love have the same roots in the psychological nature of man. Many examples of mixed erotic and religious symbolism are quoted in such works as William James's "The Varieties of Religious Experience" and James Leuba's "The Psychology of Religious Mysticism." But anybody who has a Bible at hand can study the classical instance in *The Song of Songs*. *The Song of Songs* is interpreted by King James's editors as symbolizing Christ's love for the church or for the individual. They followed the suggestion of Jewish commentators whose explanation involved God and Israel. The prevalent opinion among scholars to-day is that *The Song of Solomon* is just what it seems to be—a string of love lyrics. How did it find its way into the Library of Holy Books, that is, the

Bible? And how did the most revered exegetes come to see a religious significance in these carnal images if not because the emotions symbolized in the love poem are related to the emotions peculiar to religion?

The love of God once having become established in the mind of the saint soon ceases to be a substitute for earthly love and becomes an end in itself. It blocks the saint's every move to resume his mundane affections, which are classed as temptation. Natural love is now sin.

God for the ascetic Christian becomes a substitute for human fellowship, friendship, conjugal and parental affection. These emotions are now directed toward God, the suffering Savior, the Child Jesus or the Virgin. The ascetic feels that his affection is reciprocated. The very wants and satisfactions that have been denied with reference to human beings now become the basis of heavenly relationships.

The love of God is an incessant claim upon the spirit of the saint, for God is a jealous God demanding perpetual attention. A moment's detachment has in it possibilities of everlasting perdition. Hence, the slightest pleasure apart from God is sinful. The only sinless pleasure is absorption in God. Pain and humiliation are safeguards against sin. Self-repression, self-sacrifice, mortification are supreme virtues.

Methodism, or Puritanism, is essentially restraint, the great aim of which in banning luxury, seductive dress, alcoholic beverages, and profane speech is to

aid the spirit in its war with the flesh. Modern criticism of repression, largely influenced by Freudianism, asserts that repression never really succeeds, that impulses and desires never die, but dive down out of sight when restrained, and there, below the visible surface, distort the motives of conduct and cause maladies of the spirit that are worse than sin. But Freudian demonology very probably has been overdone, since forgetting and atrophy are doubtless also facts. A physiological organ atrophies from disuse, and memories based upon the functioning of that organ fade away. Impulses and instincts depend upon particular organs for their existence. Anger, for example, is a function of a specialized gland, the thyroid. We are asked by the Freudians to believe that every time the thyroid is checked in its propensity to damage the furniture a mark is made in some sort of a ledger and that there never is any failure to square things with the tyrant ego. It seems more in accordance with common experience to hold that desires, impulses, wishes, instincts are subject to the laws of habit—growing with indulgence and dwindling with disuse.

The saint longing for perfect holiness is engaged in a never-ending fight, and the refinement of the rules of the contest requiring victory over ideas and feelings no less than over external behavior insures for him perpetual defeat and a never-ending sense of sin. Where shall he look for help? He knows there is none in himself. Unholiness is his inevitable lot. He

must look above. He must lose his personality and acquire the mind and heart of his Savior. He must die to the flesh and be born again. But how effect this transmutation? "By faith!" cries Wesley. And how can one get faith? It can come only as a free gift, by the grace of God, invoked through prayer.

It does not matter whether you localize the saving power outside the mind, conceive it as entering and transforming the soul, or whether you place it inside and imagine it welling up from the deeps below consciousness. The practical result is the same. The modes of summoning it are identical—by prayer; or, if you will—by autosuggestion. The empirical personality of the sinner appeals to that power lying beyond, outside, inside, above or below, to come and submerge it. He literally desires to lose himself in the Savior. His whole being is gathered for self-immolation. And if his efforts succeed he has faith—identification with God, Christ, his ideal, his leader, his teacher, his friend. A break in this vital relationship, the denial of love, rebellion against God, alienation from Him, brings on the misery of sin.

It may be said that the Protestant church has abandoned celibacy. Clearly, however, St. Paul's ranking of marriage below chastity has had weight with every saint, Protestant as well as Catholic. A queer letter which George Whitefield wrote to the parents of a girl whom he wished to marry illustrates this point very plainly: "You need not be afraid of sending me

a refusal, for, I bless God, if I know anything of my heart, I am free from that foolish passion which the world calls love. I write only because I believe it is the will of God that I should alter my state; but your denial will fully convince me that your daughter is not the person appointed by God for me."

This girl declined the honor offered her by the man of God. Another accepted, but doubtless wished she had followed the first one's example, for first-class saintliness does not go well with matrimony. Whitefield's marriage was not a success.

Wesley was a pronounced ascetic throughout most of his life. At Oxford he injured his health by fasting and bizarre self-denial. As told before, one member of the Holy Club, a young man by the name of Morgan, died, it was thought, from self-imposed privations. Wesley felt called upon to write the young man's father a careful defense against the charge that his influence had caused young Morgan to go to such extremes.

Betty Kirkham, the young woman in whom Wesley was deeply interested while at Oxford, had refused him for some unknown reason and married another. Mrs. Pendarves, to whom he had next made overtures of marriage, evaded him. At that time his asceticism was in full swing. In Georgia he had promised Sophia Hopkey (so she said) to give up his ascetic mode of life if she would have him. He did actually drop vegetarianism while engaged to be married to

Grace Murray. Right after the blasting of that hope he returned to a vegetarian diet, never perhaps, he wrote, to leave it again. His marriage to Mrs. Vazeille caused him shame and exasperation. It was hardly a marriage, for he had no home. Under the circumstances his romantic illusions about Sarah Ryan and the others are easily comprehensible.

Wesley's most acute consciousness of sin came after the collapse of his mission to Georgia. He had allowed himself to be led away by his earthly love for Sophia. Now he must get back to God. The sacraments, the ritual, "doing good," had failed him. Only one way was left! He must lose himself in Christ. When that miracle occurred everything was changed. He was no longer alone, "alienated from God," but one with God, fearless and sinless.

GRACE MURRAY

IT was about a year after his return from Georgia that Wesley became acquainted with Grace Murray and plunged into another disastrous romance in which the essential elements of the one just ended with Sophia Hopkey were repeated. This episode lasted ten years. Here again we find passionate love, every opportunity to marry the lady, hesitation on moral grounds, and the lady suddenly marrying another.

Grace Murray was twenty-three years old, the widow of a sailor drowned at sea, when Wesley first met her. She had seen her husband, Alexander Murray, only during brief intervals between voyages which took him over the seas for ten or eleven months at a time. He left her three or four days after their marriage. He sailed away again a month after her child was born. When the infant died a fortnight later she fell into deep melancholy. The thought of death never left her, and she was troubled about the fate of her soul. Her sister, with whom she was living, sensibly exclaimed: "Nay, if your soul is not safe, who have lived so harmless, what will become of me?"

It was at this point in her history that Whitefield

began out-door preaching. Grace Murray went with a young woman to hear him at Blackheath, London, and as she approached the place she saw a number of people sitting on the hill, singing. "My heart was melted down as soon as I heard them," she relates, "and I felt a sweetness I had never felt before. I looked up and wondered where I was." She listened to Whitefield's preaching, but did not understand him. Still, she liked what she heard, found her heart drawn to God and began to seek Him with all her strength.

When Whitefield soon after left for Georgia, Grace was inconsolable, wept much in secret, and spent much time in the churchyard reading the inscriptions on the tombstones and standing and crying over her child's grave.

Then Wesley followed Whitefield in open-air preaching and she went to hear him. "When Mr. W. stood up and looked round on the congregation," she wrote, "I fixed my eyes upon him and felt an inexpressible conviction that he was sent of God. And when he spoke those words, 'except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God,' they went through me like a dart, and I cried out, 'Alas! What shall I do? How shall I be born again?'"

She heard Wesley preach as often as she could, and in the spring of 1740 was admitted by Charles Wesley as a member of a band society.

Grace Murray, it appears, was attractive to men

in an unusual degree. She had an enchanting voice, peculiarly sweet and of great compass. When she was a young girl dancing was her "darling sin." Her sailor husband had been madly in love with her, and one of the suitors whom she rejected, John Brydon, after marrying another, grew so distraught that Grace went about for months weighed down by the fear that his blood would be upon her head.

Wesley employed her in various ways among the Methodist societies. Later he put her in charge of an orphan house at Newcastle-upon-Tyne. She seems to have waited upon him a great deal and nursed him when he fell ill. He said to her, "Sliding into it I know not how"—(like so many others!)"—"if ever I marry, I think you will be the person."

She was of poor parentage, and had been a domestic servant. The proposal of Wesley, saint, confessor and the revered founder of the Methodist societies, nearly overwhelmed her. She could not believe he meant it.

Wesley wrote to Charles apprising him of his intention. That brought Charles down posthaste. John's marriage to a low-born person like Grace Murray would kill the Methodist movement! It would ruin John's prestige; the preachers would leave him; the jealousies of the Methodist women would disrupt the societies!

John Wesley did not agree with Charles. Grace Murray's being low-born was nothing to him, since

it did not affect her “grace or her gifts.” “Whoever I marry,” he remarked, “I believe it will not be a gentlewoman. I despair of finding any such so qualified.” He enumerates his reasons for wishing to marry Grace Murray, all natural and sensible enough. Among them is the naïve admission that “she is and would be a continual defence (under God) against unholy desires and inordinate affections; which I never did entirely conquer, for six months together, before my intercourse with her.”

She would also guard women from “inordinate affection” for him, to which they would be far less exposed, “both because they would have far less hope of success, and because I should converse far more sparingly with them. Perhaps not in private with any young women at all; at least not with any member of our own societies.”

He nevertheless subjected himself to a rigid cross-examination. Was he in his senses? Had love put out his eyes? When he was a young man he used to say that he would never marry because he could not hope ever to find such a woman as his father had. Between seventeen and twenty-seven he had believed it was unlawful for a priest to marry, being then under the illusion that such was the opinion of the early Christians and that he was following in their footsteps. St. Paul’s words to the Corinthians had a powerful influence upon his mind: “But I would have you without carefulness. **H**e that is unmarried caret

for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord. But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please *his* wife." He had feared to take a step that would obstruct the great work in which he was engaged. Besides, he was unable to support a wife.

All these objections had now disappeared. He had accepted St. Paul's other well-known dictum with regard to the preferability of wedlock to celibacy. He had discovered that there were women in the world who were the equals of his mother in character and piety. As for his being unable to keep a wife, there were people in the world both able and willing to keep him. But what weighed most in his judgment were Grace Murray's abundant qualifications as housekeeper, nurse, companion, friend and fellow laborer in the Gospel, and last but not least her personal charms. He was convinced, first, that he ought to marry; second that Grace Murray was the person.

"Now show me the woman in England, Wales or Ireland who has already done so much good as G. M.," he demands of his diary. "I will say more. Show me in all the English annals one whom God has employed in so high a degree, I might say, in all the history of the Church, from the death of our Lord to this day. This is no hyperbole, but plain, demonstrable fact. And if it be, who is so proper to be my wife?"

The evidence that he was in love is conclusive. "Was

this inordinate affection?" he asks himself, taking up his self-examination. "No; it was not. What are the signs of inordinate affection?"

1. Inordinate affection leads from God. But this continually led me to Him.
2. Inord. Affec. makes us less desirous of doing the works of God, less zealous to pray, preach or do Good of any kind. But this increased my Desire of Doing Good of every kind and my zeal to do all the works of God.
3. Inord. Affec. makes us cold and dead in preaching, praying or any other office of religion. But this made me more alive in all, more sensible of the power and presence of God.
4. Inord. Affec. creates jealousy towards rivals and resentment towards them that oppose it. But I never felt a minute's jealousy, even of J. B., nor a minute's resentment towards those who tore her from me.
5. Inord. Affec. necessarily creates uneasiness in the absence of the object of it. Whereas I never was uneasy, neither in parting, nor after it; no more than if she had been a common person. For all these reasons (and I might mention several more) I could not conceive, that mine was an inord. Affec. Unless it was such an inord. Affection, as never was before from the beginning of the world.

Although so completely in love Wesley had been associated with Grace in Methodist work for ten years before he made his half-involuntary marriage proposal. He then wished to put off the wedding day still longer. He told her that he would take her with

him to Ireland in the spring, but that they must part for the present. She begged not to be separated from him, and he allowed her to accompany him on his circuit through Yorkshire and Derbyshire. At Cheshire he left her with John Bennet, one of his preachers.

Bennet was better educated than the majority of the Methodist preachers, had studied for the ministry, had been a justice's clerk and in business and was about the same age as Grace Murray. He was no less impressed with Grace's wifely qualifications than Wesley. The day after Wesley departed, Bennet proposed to her, and a day or two later she accepted. Wesley received a letter from Bennet informing him of the happy event.

Grace had not told Bennet of her engagement to Wesley. She could not believe that Wesley was in real earnest, and Wesley generously ascribed her silence to fear of injuring a great spiritual leader's reputation. She might have fallen in love with Bennet. Bennet, however, had a dream, which shows that he was not entirely unaware how matters stood between Grace and Wesley. He dreamed that she was in distress and Wesley was saying to her he loved her as much as ever.

Throughout the following winter Grace vacillated. When she received a letter from Wesley she resolved to live and die with him. When she heard from Bennet she felt the same way toward Bennet. She had agreed to meet Bennet at Sheffield on her way to Ire-

land, but as he was kept from coming by the death of his brother-in-law, she went on to Bristol, where she met Wesley. Wesley assured her that he meant what he said, hard though it was for her to believe that so exalted a personage would stoop to her, and he succeeded in convincing her that her promise to Bennet was invalid because of her prior engagement to him.

They went to Ireland together and spent several months making the round of the societies. She was an active worker, examining the society members, visiting the sick, praying with the mourners and waiting upon Wesley. He fell more and more in love, and when they returned from Ireland they were definitely engaged to be married. She had not written to Bennet, and Wesley assumed that he was no longer to be reckoned with.

Soon after their return to Bristol, Grace heard some idle gossip about Wesley and a certain Molly Francis. In a fit of jealousy she wrote an affectionate letter to Bennet and the next day in a fit of remorse told Wesley what she had done. Bennet wrote back that he would meet her when she came north, and, true to his word, he was at Epworth in Lancaster when Wesley and Grace Murray arrived.

Wesley was on the point of having it out with Bennet when he was told that Grace had sent all his letters to his rival.

“I saw if these things were so, he had the best right

to her," wrote Wesley, and he sent her a note saying that they must converse no more.

She came running to him and begged him not to talk that way unless he wished to kill her, but when Bennet arrived on the scene and claimed her as his betrothed she offered no resistance.

Wesley was stunned. "Why should I speak," he thought, "to lay a ground of future uneasiness between them? If each insist upon his claim it will be cutting her in sunder. She will die in the contest."

He determined to give her up.

A few hours later word was brought him that Sister Murray was exceedingly ill and obliged to stay in bed. It seemed only decent, under the circumstances, to go to her. She told him she loved him a thousand times more than Bennet, but was afraid Bennet would go mad if she rejected him. She showed a letter from Bennet which confirmed her statement as to the violence of his feelings.

In the evening Bennet himself came and finding Grace alone succeeded with the help of one David Trathen in getting her to promise to marry him.

Next morning she told Wesley what had happened. He now put the question point-blank: "Which will you choose?" "I am determined by conscience as well as inclination to live and die with *you*," she replied.

That evening Wesley wrote Bennet a long letter reviewing the story of his love for Grace Murray, his engagement to her, Bennet's unfriendly trespassing

and his unfair urging of Grace to marry him. "Now, my brother," wrote Wesley, "pray earnestly that God would show you and me what is right in this matter." Bennet, he pointed out, had been unfaithful and treacherous, had tried to rob his brother and friend of a faithful servant, of the fellow laborer in the Gospel whom he had been forming to his hand for ten years. Was this consistent either with gratitude or friendship; nay, with common justice or humanity?

"Oh, that you would take Scripture and Reason for your rule," he exclaims, "instead of blind and impetuous passion! I can say no more—only this—you may tear her away by violence, but my consent I cannot, dare not give: nor, I fear, can God give you His blessing."

The letter was entrusted to William Shent, a barber who often did errands for Wesley, but it was never delivered.

Wesley and Grace Murray now set out for Berwick. They visited all the Methodist societies on the way. Every hour added to his conviction that he had found the right and proper mate. Yet to her request for immediate marriage he demurred. It would be necessary: 1. To satisfy John Bennet; 2. To procure Charles' consent; 3. To send an account of the reasons on which he proceeded to every helper and every society in England, at the same time desiring their prayers. He refused, after all, to risk the destruction of his organization. Grace said she would

not be willing to wait more than a year. He replied that perhaps less time would suffice. In the presence of Christopher Hopper they renewed the engagement made in Dublin. Grace remained at Annandale to work among the band societies; Wesley rode on to Whitehaven, which was developing into a great harbor for the coal trade and an important industrial and commercial center.

As soon as he reached Whitehaven, Wesley's mind was filled with gloomy forebodings. He dreamed that Bennett came to him and when Wesley asked, "Where is Grace Murray?" Bennet replied: "At Chinley," which was Bennet's home. He slept no more that night. He wrote to Grace and was amazed at his own opening:

There is I know not what of sad presage
That tells me we shall never meet again.

What could Grace think when she read those lines?

He tried to cast off his depression, told himself that neither life nor death could part them now, but on Sunday afternoon he felt a shiver pass through him as he read in the first Scripture Lesson: "Son of man, behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke!"—the text that had an ominous way of turning up to sound the sacrificial motif in Wesley's career. It had done so in Savannah. Was his Bible trained to open at that page? He went home in a

fever but preached to a large congregation and felt better.

Charles had received a copy of the letter that never reached Bennet. He was shocked. He must prevent these people from putting a stop to the work of God! He set out at once for Whitehaven to save Methodism, gathering a crop of rumors from the brethren and sisters as he went.

John disputed Charles' gloomy predictions as to the effect of his marriage upon the Methodist societies. Personally he was not interested in Grace's ancestors, but in her "qualifications." Nevertheless he was willing to arbitrate. Let their trusty umpire, Vincent Perronet, vicar of Shoreham, "the archbishop of the Methodists," as Charles affectionately called him, their admirer and loyal friend, judge between them. Charles agreed.

John went on with his preaching and organizing in Whitehaven. Upon his return to his lodging after a morning's work he learned with amazement that Charles and barber Shent had taken horse and departed some hours ago. He guessed correctly that they were headed for Hinely Hill where he had left Grace Murray at the house of Hannah Broadwood. He had an appointment to preach at Hinely Hill the next night, so he set out after them. He lost his way in a mist and rode over bogs blindly yet unerringly to his destination. Before he reached Hannah Broadwood's house she met him with the news that Mr.

Charles and Grace Murray had ridden away on the same horse two hours earlier.

"The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord," exclaimed Wesley promptly.

James Broadwood looked at him and burst into tears. Wesley declared he must go on to Newcastle after them, but Broadwood stopped him. He would go himself and with God's leave bring her back.

Wesley preached according to schedule that evening to a large congregation on the text "And I saw a great white throne . . . and I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God."

He spent the next day in fasting and prayer, sad but calm. He was consoled by John Brown, a Methodist farmer, and Christopher Hopper.

On the following day he turned back to Whitehaven—unanswerable proof, he triumphantly points out, that his love for Grace Murray was not "inordinate affection." Had it been that, had he prized her more than the work of God, he would have gone straight to Newcastle where she was and not back to Whitehaven. He reached Whitehaven after a stormy two days' ride.

"To-day I resumed my spare diet," he wrote, "which I shall probably quit no more." Back to vegetarianism! His distraction was so great that he forgot an appointment to preach at Leeds on Wednesday until Charles Perronet reminded him of it. With

work ahead, he grew calmer. He prayed that if God saw good He would show him what would be the end of these things, perhaps in a dream or vision of the night. And he dreamed! He saw a man bring out Grace Murray and tell her she was condemned to die. Everything was ready for the execution. She spoke no word, nor showed any reluctance, but walked with him to the scaffold. The sentence was executed without her stirring either hand or foot. He looked at her till he saw her face turn black, until he could bear it no longer, and went away, but returned quickly and desired she might be cut down. She was then laid upon a bed and he sat mourning by her. She then came to and began to speak and he awoke.

At Leeds, Whitefield met him. Charles, Whitefield reported, would be there after seeing John Bennet and Grace Murray married. Whitefield wept and prayed over Wesley. He had tried to persuade the group at Newcastle to wait until they had seen John, but Charles' impetuosity had borne down all before it. Sleeplessness and the fear of madness beset John. "But God took the matter into His hands,"—giving him on a sudden, sound and quiet sleep.

Charles arrived on Thursday (October 5). Bursting with righteous indignation, he blurted at John: "Villain! I renounce all intercourse with you but what I would have with an heathen man or a publican." It was only throwing another drop of water upon a drowning man, thought John. He ac-

cepted the severance of diplomatic relations calmly. Whitefield and John Nelson, who were present, wept, prayed and begged until the tension relaxed. The brothers fell upon each other's neck. Bennet entered and there were more tears and embraces.

The mystified John now learned the facts of Grace Murray's abduction. Charles had burst upon her, tragically exclaiming, "Grace Murray, you have broken my heart!" and fell in a swoon. When he came to he showed her how close to the abyss she had come, having been on the verge of allowing a man of John Wesley's importance to the salvation of the world marry a woman betrothed to another. Such an act would have undone John and wrecked the Methodist movement. There was still time, however, for her to save herself from committing this unpardonable sin. Charles intended, he said, to take John with him to London.

Grace, bewildered by John Wesley's gloomy note, believed Charles spoke with his brother's knowledge and that John had given her up. She had therefore consented to go with Charles and be married to Bennet.

It had been necessary, however, for Charles to reason with Bennet, who was very angry. Charles put all the blame for Grace's vacillation upon John. The woman had been helpless against Wesley's authority and cunning, Charles' reasoning was more successful than he could have hoped. He not only convinced Bennet but all the brothers and sisters of the Method-

ist societies in Newcastle that John was a child of Satan. "If John Wesley is not damned there is no God," cried Bennet. A witness was found who affirmed that Wesley had ordered him to find a place for Grace in some remote country society where she could live in seclusion. "Good God! What will the world say?" exclaimed one good Methodist. "He is tired of her and so thrusts his mistress in a corner. Sister Murray, will you consent to this?"

"No, I will die first," replied Grace, "I will have John Bennet, if he will have me."

And so they had been married.

They had then ridden on contentedly to Leeds and were willing to give John Wesley the pleasure of seeing the bride, also an opportunity of acknowledging his sin before John Bennet.

But John was not in a confessing mood and saw no reason for viewing the bride. Two days later however they sent word to him again that Bennet and his bride wished to see him and he went. Unable to speak they sat weeping until Wesley asked Grace what she had said to cause Charles to accost him as he had done.

She fell at his feet and with tears and sighs declared she never had spoken or could speak against him. Bennet too knelt down and begged forgiveness for what he had said. "I can forgive," wrote John in his diary, "but who can redress the wrong?"

Wesley's self-control stands out in heroic contrast to the hot-headed meddling of Charles. Many writers

have said he was cold. On the contrary, he was sentimental to weakness. It was an age of "sentiment," an age in which Richardson's lachrymose novels were best sellers, when Laurence Sterne's sentimentalism took Europe by storm. Wesley too was "a man of feeling," although checked and thwarted by the ascetic complex acquired in his Oxford days.

Grace Murray lived to be eighty-eight, forty-four years a widow, Bennet having died ten years after his marriage. She met Wesley once, in 1788, when he was eighty-five years old and she seventy-three. Henry Moore, who was present, says "the interview was affecting, but Mr. Wesley preserved more than his usual self-possession."

SPELLBINDING

FEW men have been so strangely misrepresented as Wesley. Hampson, one of Wesley's early biographers, cautiously admits: "Still, there can be no question that Wesley when he took pains was an able preacher." Tyerman, his most exhaustive biographer, credits him with a "graceful and easy attitude in the pulpit," and concedes that "his action was calm, natural, pleasing and expressive; his voice not loud, but clear and manly." Warming up, however, Tyerman continues rashly: "His preaching was without Whitefield's Demosthenic eloquence, but it had the accuracy of a scholar, the authority of an ambassador, the unction of a saint, the power of God. It was always searching, but not often terrible and severe, except when addressed to congregations rich, respectable and polite." Is it any wonder that one of the most remarkable leaders of men is so little known?

Wesley relates how he came to Cardiff at six o'clock of an evening and had almost the whole town to hear him: "My heart was so enlarged I knew not how to give over, so we continued three hours." On another occasion, in the midst of a partly hostile mob, he called

for a chair to stand on: "The winds were hushed and all was calm and still; my heart was filled with love, my eyes with tears and my mouth with arguments. They were amazed. They were ashamed. They were melted down. They devoured every word." At the little town of Stanley he spoke in the evening to some three thousand persons for nearly two hours, the darkness of night and a little lightning "not lessening the numbers but increasing the seriousness of the hearers." Were these things done by an occasionally able preacher blessed with a clear, manly voice and an easy, graceful pulpit manner?

The evidence indicates that Wesley must have had a truly extraordinary voice. Gladstone's speech at Blackheath, London, in 1871, where he spoke to an audience of twenty thousand, was rated as the greatest oratorical achievement of his career. He was sixty-two years old, and only very powerful vocal organs could have held an assemblage of such a size. Gladstone, indeed, had according to John Morley, a "clarion voice." When Wesley was about the same age (August 10, 1766) he spoke at Dawgren to a congregation, closely wedged together, forty yards by a hundred, which he estimated at about twenty thousand persons. This was at one o'clock. Between five and six the same day he spoke to just such another congregation at Leeds. A month later, in the natural amphitheater at Gwennap, he spoke again to an audience of about twenty thousand persons.

It has been doubted whether any man could be heard by such vast concourses of people out of doors. Benjamin Franklin undertook to settle this question by experiment. He measured the carrying power of Whitefield's voice when Whitefield preached in Philadelphia. Standing at the edge of the crowd which, from the area it covered he estimated to be about thirty thousand, he found he could hear Whitefield with perfect distinctness.

When Wesley preached at Birstal in 1752 he observed that a number of persons sat listening on the side of the opposite hill (called Brown Hill). It was one hundred and forty yards from where he had stood, yet the people had heard perfectly: "I did not think any human voice could have reached so far," he comments.

At the age of seventy he preached again at Gwendrap, in the natural amphitheater which measured about eighty yards square. The audience not only filled it but overflowed to a considerable distance. Wesley calculated that, with five persons to a square yard, there must have been more than thirty thousand persons, and he found upon inquiry that all could hear, even to the outskirts of the congregation. "Perhaps the first time that a man of seventy had been heard by thirty thousand persons at once!" he remarked cheerfully.

Wesley used his voice with skill, as may be inferred from the advice he gave to his assistants. In a letter

to one of them (which at the same time explodes the prevalent idea that he was without humor), he writes:

Dear John,

Always take advice or reproof as a favor; it is the surest mark of love. I advised you once and you took it as an affront; nevertheless, I will do it once more. Scream no more at the peril of your soul! Speak as earnestly as you can, but do not scream; speak with all your heart, but with moderate voice. Be a follower of me. I often speak loud, often vehemently, but I never scream—I never strain myself. I dare not. Perhaps one reason why that good man Thomas Walsh—yea, and John Manners too—were in such grievous darkness before they died was because they shortened their own lives by overexertion. O John, pray for an advisable and tractable temper! By nature you are very far from it. Your last letter was written in a very wrong spirit. If you cannot take advice from others, surely you might take it from your

Affectionate brother,

JOHN WESLEY

The careful attention he paid to the technique of preaching is revealed in the rules he drew up for his helpers. Among them are the following:

1. Be sure never to disappoint a congregation unless in case of life and death.
2. Begin and end precisely at the time appointed.
3. Let your whole deportment before a congregation be serious, weighty and solemn.

4. Always suit your subject to your audience.
5. Choose the plainest texts you can.
6. Take care not to ramble, but keep to your text and make out what you take in hand.
7. Be sparing in allegorizing or spiritualizing.
8. Take care of anything awkward or affected, either in your gesture, phrase or pronunciation.
10. Print nothing without my approbation.
11. Do not usually pray above eight or ten minutes (at most) without intermission.
13. In repeating the Lord's Prayer, remember to say "Hallowed," not "hollowed"; "trespass against *us*"; "amen."
18. Avoid the fashionable impropriety of leaving out the "u" in many words, as "honour," "vigour," and so forth.
19. Avoid quaint words, however in fashion, as "object," "originate," "very," "high," and so forth.
20. Beware of clownishness, whether in speech or dress.
Wear no slouched hat.

And then comes an admonition upon a matter not strictly belonging to the art of rhetoric:

21. Be merciful to your beast. Not only ride moderately, but see with your own eyes that your horse be rubbed, fed and bedded.

There is much more about topics for sermons, ways of praying and responding, and about hymns and tunes. He closed the subject with a bit of his usual homely practicality: "After preaching, take a little lemonade, mild ale or candied orange peel. All spirit-

uous liquors, at that time especially, are deadly poison."

Wesley's personal appearance fascinated his audiences. Although small in stature (five feet four inches) he was finely proportioned and his eyes even in old age were extraordinarily bright and piercing. His composed, resolute air drew a hushed attention. Henry Moore, his friend and biographer, seeing the Duke of Wellington standing by his horse on a parade-ground, remarked: "There's the image of John Wesley!" The Duke came of a branch of the same family. The portraits most commonly published show him in old age, white-haired and venerable, serene and self-possessed, but the true Wesley, the man who brought Christianity back to life in England, is very probably seen in the portrait, painted in 1743, which is now at Didsbury College. The Cromwellian firmness mingled with sweetness in this striking picture helps considerably to make the great Methodist reformation intelligible.

We get a picture of Wesley's style of operation in his own description of his first visit to Newcastle. Walking down to "the poorest and most contemptible part of the town" with one companion, he took his stand at the end of a street and began singing the 100th Psalm. Three or four persons came to see what was the matter. Soon four or five hundred joined them. Before he was through there were twelve to fifteen hundred. They stood gaping and staring at

him in astonishment when he had finished preaching. "If you desire to know who I am," he told them, "my name is John Wesley. At five in the evening, with God's help, I design to preach here again." At five his audience covered the hill on which he was to preach from top to bottom. When he was through speaking his listeners were ready to tread him under foot "out of pure love and kindness."

His published sermons, though not as banal as Whitefield's, leave the reader wondering what could have held such great audiences. But these were not the sermons he spoke. He preached extempore from an outline and, like Whitefield, he preached the same sermon over and over. Irrelevancies and trivialities dropped out until finally every word sped like a bullet to its mark.

Wesley began with an elaborate style but as his intelligent servant, Betty, could not understand him he changed it. St. John's First Epistle, where he found "the strongest sense and the plainest language, simplicity and sublimity together," was his model.

His aim, he said in the preface to his printed sermons, was to address the bulk of mankind, those who care nothing about the art of speaking but who are nevertheless shrewd judges of what is necessary for their happiness. He wished to utter plain truth for plain people, and therefore, of set purpose abstained from all refined philosophical speculations, from all intricate reasonings and, as far as possible, from even

the show of learning. He labored to avoid all words which were not easily understood or not used in common conversation.

"Is there need to apologize for the plainness of my style?" he wrote. "I could even now write as floridly and rhetorically as even the admired Dr. B——; but I dare not, because I seek the honor that cometh of God only. What is the praise of man to me that have one foot in the grave and am stepping into the land from whence I shall not return? Therefore I dare no more write in a fine style than wear a fine coat."

Wesley made each man and woman feel as if the whole weight of his denunciation or pleading was directed at him or her individually. His manner was strangely calm, but it was the calm of restrained emotion. Often he had to stop in order to give his hearers an opportunity to ease their feelings in song and prayer.

He spoke of things that were of vital interest to himself and his hearers. His logic was sometimes strained, his style of reasoning obsolete, but the people hung upon his words, for they felt that he was speaking of things that were as intensely real to him as to them. It was his tone of absolute conviction that held them. He always reasoned; he reasoned elaborately, ostentatiously. He had hit upon the secret that "a controlled and reasoning fanaticism is one of the most powerful means of stirring the feelings of man."

Wesley's style of preaching has often been con-

trasted with Whitefield's. Whitefield was all thunder, emotion and tears. Wesley was logical and analytical. Yet the effects produced by Wesley were more violent as well as more lasting than Whitefield's. The impression both men made on a hearer is related by John Nelson, one of Wesley's most famous converts:

"Mr. Whitefield was to me as a man who could play well on an instrument, for his preaching was pleasant to me, and I loved the man, so that if any one offered to disturb him I was ready to fight for him. But I did not understand him. I was like a wandering bird cast out of its nest until Mr. John Wesley came to preach his first sermon at Moorfields. As soon as he got upon the stand, he stroked back his hair and turned his face towards where I stood and, I thought, fixed such an awful dread upon me, before I heard him speak, that it made my heart beat like the pendulum of a clock; and when he did speak, I thought his whole discourse was aimed at me. When he had done, I said, 'This man can tell the secrets of my heart; he hath not left me there; for he hath showed me the remedy, even the blood of Jesus.' I thought he spoke to no one but me, and I durst not look up, for I imagined all the people were looking at me."

In the early years of the revival, Wesley's preaching produced effects upon many of his listeners that to him seemed highly gratifying but were extremely repugnant to many of his friends as well as to his critics. These manifestations were of a hysterical na-

ture—shrieks, groans, trances and convulsions. Similar effects had been seen in the Jonathan Edwards revival at Northampton, Massachusetts. Wesley, in fact, on October 9, 1738, while walking from London to Oxford, had read Edwards' own account of these occurrences and discussed them with his friends.

The first instance of this manifestation in a congregation of Wesley's occurred on April 17, 1739, in Bristol. He was expounding the fourth chapter of Acts, concerning the healing of a lame man by John and Peter. At the conclusion of the sermon he called upon God "to confirm his word," and that was the cue to a woman standing close to the preacher, who raised an outcry as if she were in the agonies of death. The congregation continued to pray until she changed her tune and sang a good Methodist hymn. Two others followed in the same manner; they too ended with praise to God and their Saviour.

On April 26, at Newgate, Wesley again called upon God to bear witness to His word. He was preaching the newly discovered doctrine of instantaneous rebirth, and there were persons in the audience who took him at his word. They felt the pangs of rebirth, and sank to the floor one after another. These manifestations spread until "all Newgate rang with the cries of the stricken sinners." Prayer and song usually restored them to a happier frame of mind.

On May 1, in Baldwin Street, Bristol, Wesley's voice could hardly be heard above the groans and cries

of the sinners who were calling for salvation. Again, when the congregation, at Wesley's request, prayed for the deliverance of the unhappy sinners the uproar subsided.

A Quaker who had stood near Wesley biting his lips and knitting his brows at what he thought was pure acting and hypocrisy himself suddenly fell down as if lifeless. Wesley prayed over him and he lifted up his head and cried aloud: "Now I know thou art a prophet of the Lord!" As this Quaker did not believe in or desire an instantaneous rebirth his case can hardly be regarded as confirmation of the Divine source of all the conversions.

Many of Wesley's friends were shocked at these unseemly emotional displays. Whitefield, Wesley's brother Charles and his older brother Samuel (the schoolmaster at Tiverton) objected strongly. They believed the excitement was fraudulent and could be prevented if the subjects wished. They were angry with John for encouraging such outbreaks. Whitefield wrote to him:

Honoured Sir—I cannot think it right in you to give so much encouragement to those convulsions which people have been thrown into under your ministry. Was I to do so, how many would cry out every night? I think it is tempting God to require such signs. That there is something of God in it, I doubt not. But the devil, I believe, interposes.

Some said the bad air of the crowded rooms helped to bring on the fits. But the answer to this explana-

tion was given when the converts began dropping not in closed rooms but in the open air and observed by several thousand spectators. The sufferers were persons previously unknown to Wesley. One named Thomas Maxfield roared and beat himself against the ground so that six men could hardly hold him. Wesley saw in this spectacle a sinner intending to abandon his evil ways but torn by the devil who was working to prevent the conversion. On this day there were seven cases in the morning out of doors and twenty-nine in the evening in a room.

That Wesley encouraged the outbreaks is obvious. He believed they were evidence of the conflict between God and Satan, that the uproar was caused by the desperate resistance of the devil to expulsion from a soul which was turning toward God. Wesley made no attempt to conceal his awed expectancy. By his attitude he not only permitted the disturbances but he suggested them. His audiences were being initiated, he felt, into the ritual of rebirth.

When Whitefield preached in Bristol a few days after he had written his letter to Wesley the convulsions and the outcries broke out in his congregation as in Wesley's. Four persons sank down together close to him. One lay perfectly still; another was seized with a violent trembling; a third groaned and was convulsed; the fourth screamed and wept. Wesley pointed to this occurrence as a vindication of himself and expressed the hope that his advisers would allow

God to carry on His own work in His own way.

The outbreaks continued also when Charles Wesley preached in Bristol, although they had not occurred elsewhere under his preaching. Women screamed for mercy so loudly as to drown his voice. But when he made intelligent efforts to stop the noise, he succeeded. "To-day one who came from the ale-houses drunk," he writes in his journal, "was pleased to fall into a fit for my entertainment and beat himself heartily. I thought it a pity to hinder him, so instead of singing over him, as had been often done, we left him to recover at his leisure. Another, a girl, as she began her cry, I ordered to be carried out. Her convulsion was so violent as to take away the use of her limbs, till they laid and left her without the door. Then immediately she found her legs and walked off." A girl at Bristol, when questioned about her fits and trances, confessed that she got them to make Wesley take notice of her.

Whitefield said he could have caused the physical symptoms had he wished. He could, he knew, make his audiences weep at will. Generally he entertained rather than convinced, and as he was one of the greatest of actors men went to hear him for the mere pleasure of listening to his voice. But when he preached in Wesley's place the audience, still responding to Wesley's suggestion, behaved as it had done under Wesley.

Wesley had the peculiar art of speaking of the most

improbable things in a calm tone, indicating the most intense conviction. The miners, foundrymen, weavers, spinners, day laborers and their wives and the young girls of Bristol and Kingswood knew him as a world-renowned saint and scholar. That gave him extraordinary prestige with them. When he told them a man could be born again in the twinkling of an eye, and called upon God to prove the truth of his word, there were always among two thousand listeners some suggestible individuals who felt the thing happening. The example once set, imitators followed.

The population of Bristol and its environs where most of these phenomena occurred at that time had the reputation of being the most ignorant and brutal in England; famous, according to Wesley himself, for fearing neither God nor man; so ignorant that they were but one remove from the beasts that perish and utterly without the desire of instruction. Here the revival began and made the greatest progress.

The roaring, screaming and convulsions began to be duplicated in other places. A young woman of nineteen at Kingswood had to be held down in her bed by two or three persons while she writhed and shrieked: "I am damned, damned, lost for ever! I am the devil's now. I have given myself to him. I cannot be saved. Come, good devil, come! Take me away!" Wesley the exorcist was sent for. He began a hymn—"Arm of the Lord, awake, awake!"—and the woman immediately fell asleep. When they paused

in their singing she awoke and resumed her raving, and another young woman caught the contagion. Charles Wesley came in at nine o'clock in the evening to help his brother and they continued to pray and sing till midnight. At that hour the tired girls joined the exorcists in their pious recitals.

It was regarded by the good Methodists as a remarkable instance of clairvoyance when a woman whom Wesley was coming to relieve of the devil exclaimed while he was still three miles distant and invisible to the physical eye: "Yonder comes Wesley galloping as fast as he can!" Upon his arrival Wesley bluntly addressed the devil thus: "I command thee in the name of the Lord Jesus to tell if thou hast commission to torment any other soul!" The devil answered, through the mouth of the woman, "I have!" and named two women living some distance away who were supposed at that time to be in perfect health. The next day Wesley called on Mrs. Jones in Kingswood, where the women named by the devil happened to be, and in a quarter of an hour first one and then the other showed signs of agony, groaned, shrieked and blasphemed. Under the impact of Wesley's prayer, however, Satan fled, leaving the two women gratefully praising God.

The spiritual maladies of the elders affected the children. One child while in a trance for six hours dreamed she was being led by an angel clad in a shining robe which reached to its feet. The angel led her

to heaven, where she saw Christ sitting on a throne next to God with a pen in His hand and a book in which He set down the prayers and good deeds of His people and in another book at His left wrote the curses and evil deeds of the wicked. The child was religious ever after but "very sickly and weak in body."

The criticism to which Wesley was subjected by friend and foe for permitting and encouraging these manifestations set him to investigating them in his usual methodical manner. He enquired of a number of victims how they felt when they cried out and what it was that caused them to behave as they did. He found that all were in good health. The impulse to cut up came to them suddenly either while they were listening to him or thinking later of what he had said. They described their pains in different ways—as if a sword were run through them or as if a great weight lay upon them and squeezed them to the ground. Some said they choked and could not breathe; that their hearts swelled ready to burst; or that their hearts and insides and whole bodies were being torn to pieces. There you have the proof, argued Wesley, that Satan was tearing at the insides of these poor people to prevent their coming to Christ; or strangling them to stop them from praising God; or roaring so as to frighten them from listening to the saving word of God as spoken by His minister.

As soon as the popular hysteria began to take a

form that shocked John Wesley's sense of decency he stopped it. A number of women in the London society allowed their minds to dwell too steadily upon the blood of the Lamb and began to feel it running warm upon their arms, down their throats or poured out upon their breasts. Having patiently heard the facts Wesley announced that he would approve such experiences only in so far as they symbolized the working of the spirit of God "in peace and joy and love." But beyond that he must believe them to be only "the empty dream of an heated imagination."

Although Wesley's spoken sermons differed from the sermons that have come down to us, their substance and tone are evident in the printed sermons. We see there what it was that terrified the unlearned Britishers. His simple, direct style gave force to his utterances. "Mine and your desert is hell," he says to his auditors, "and it is mere mercy, free undeserved mercy, that we are not now in unquenchable fire." He made each one feel that he or she individually was meant. "Art thou thoroughly convinced that thou deservest everlasting damnation?" he would demand, pointing at a trembling old woman or an open-eyed young girl. "Would God do thee any wrong if He commanded the earth to open and swallow thee up—if thou wert to go down into the pit—into the fire that never shall be quenched?" When he offered these properly terrified sinners the chance to shed their old

selves and become pure and good by the easy way of faith in Christ the temptation to close with his offer was to many irresistible.

Wesley's sermon on "The Great Assize" is typical. It was preached in St. Paul's Church, Bedford, before the judges who were at the time holding court in the town. He exploited the pomp and ceremony of the human tribunal as a symbol of the great assize, or last judgment, when all mankind would stand before the judgment seat of Christ. That they would stand there, that He would sit there and give judgment, Wesley assumed without question. Under what conditions, then, would the great assize be held? What kind of verdicts would Christ give? He assumed that all his hearers were as much interested in these questions as they were in the outcome of their neighbors' trials for stealing a purse or a sheep.

Wesley's realistic discussion took their breaths away. Where would the last judgment be held—on the earth or in heaven? How many souls would be judged there? He went through ostentatious arithmetical calculations, a device Defoe used with great effect in his imaginative works. The number of indictable offenses was tremendous. Every act, every word, every thought, would be judged! "It shall be clearly and infallibly seen who is righteous and who is unrighteous and in what degree every action or person or character was either good or evil." An appalling program, even for the Almighty!

There followed the familiar separation of the sheep from the goats, on the right hand and the left. The good having been sent to heaven for eternal happiness, the wicked into hell, and the Biblical hints as to the nature of their torments duly "enforced," the preacher lifted up the imagination of his hearers to the final scene of the judgment day, when the heavens shall be shrivelled up as a parchment scroll and pass away with a great noise, "and all, all will die, perish, vanish away like a dream when one awaketh."

Here again Defoe's method was employed. An apparently serious and scientific discussion of the possibility of such a solid thing as the earth vanishing, being consumed in an instant, was offered. Even non-Christians, Wesley pointed out, admit that this is possible. It might be caused by a comet striking the earth, by lightning, by subterranean fire bursting forth as we are reminded when Etna, Hecla, or Vesuvius goes into action; fire, latent in all things, might do it (a bit of ancient physics). But there shall be a new heaven and a new earth in which there shall be no sorrow, no tears! See! See! He cometh! The Creator of the new world! He maketh the clouds His chariot! He rideth upon the wings of the wind! "Sinner, doth He not now knock at the door of thy heart? Oh, that ye may now give yourselves to Him who gave Himself for you, in humble faith, in holy, active, patient love! So shall ye rejoice with exceeding joy in His day, when He cometh in the clouds of heaven!"

The preacher's hearers knew the dourness of judges, and he had shown them besides the fires of hell and a cosmic cataclysm. From all this they might be saved by a last-minute pardon if they would have faith in Christ and undergo the necessary rebirth.

MOBS

WESLEY had been initiated into field preaching by Whitefield. In Whitefield's first attempt at Moorfield Common he had spoken to two hundred. The second time he had two thousand listeners. A few days later *The Gentlemen's Magazine* reported: "On Saturday the 18th instant, he preached at Hanham Mount to five or six thousand persons and in the evening removed to the common, about half a mile further, where Three Mounts and the plains around were crowded with such a multitude of coaches and horsemen that they covered three acres and were computed at twenty thousand people." Whitefield was undoubtedly one of the greatest popular orators England has known.

Wesley himself never quite overcame his original compunctions against field preaching. He loved a commodious auditorium, a soft cushion and a handsome pulpit, and he hesitated long when Whitefield, who had broken the ice, invited him to come to Bristol and preach in his place out of doors. But he saw that by field preaching he could reach those who would never enter a church.

Wesley's missionary work begun with the miners in the Kingswood district, continued among the crowds of manufacturing cities. He travelled where the population was thickest. The life of England was changing under the influence of the industrial revolution. Its population increased over fifty per cent in the last half of the eighteenth century, and the entire increment occurred in the manufacturing centers.

Methodism spread very little in the agricultural districts. Wesley disliked farmers as a class, and he scoffed at the conventional idealization of the farmer's life, which in reality consisted of rough fare, hard labor and monotony. Besides, it was hard to collect large audiences of farmers, and Methodism needed close association and frequent meetings. He liked the gentry as audiences even less than the farmers, although he enjoyed private association with them. "How hard it is to be superficial enough to hold their attention," he remarks.

One of the most remarkable of Wesley's preaching stations was the natural amphitheater at Gwennap, in Cornwall. He describes the scene on a calm, still evening, with the sun setting behind him and an immense multitude facing him, many sitting on the little hills some distance from the main congregation: "I think this is one of the most magnificent spectacles which is to be seen on this side heaven, and no music is to be heard upon earth comparable to the sound of many thousand voices when they are all harmoniously

joined together singing praises to God and the Lamb."

At St. Ives he preached within sound of the sea from a pulpit conveniently formed by the natural rock: "Here well nigh the whole town, high and low, rich and poor, assembled together. Nor was there a word to be heard, nor a smile seen, from one end of the congregation to the other. It was just the same the three following evenings. Indeed, I was afraid on Saturday that the roaring of the sea, raised by the north wind, would have prevented their hearing. But God gave me so clear and strong a voice that I believe scarce one word was lost."

Again: "I rode to Blanchard, about twenty miles from Newcastle. The rough mountains round about were still white with snow. In the midst of them is a small winding valley through which the Derwent runs. On the edge of this, the little town stands, which is indeed little more than a heap of ruins. There seems to have been a large cathedral church, by the vast walls which still remain. I stood in the churchyard under one side of the building upon a large tombstone round which, while I was at prayers, all the congregation kneeled down on the grass. They were gathered out of the lead mines, from all parts; many from Annandale six miles off. A row of children sat under the opposite wall, all quiet and still. The whole congregation drank in every word, with such earnestness in

their looks, that I could not but hope that God will make this wilderness sing for joy."

Wesley's itinerancy attracted as much attention as his field preaching. His riding about in rain and snow, in heat and cold, preaching as he went, was a subject of discussion in every village. Who would not come out to hear what such a man had to say? The dangers and hardships of travel were well known to his audiences. His coming in those days of little traffic was one of the rare events of country life. He brought news to the hamlets of the great outside world and joined the Methodist societies together with matters of common interest. Highwaymen who infested the roads let him and all other Methodist preachers alone — perhaps they knew the preachers had nothing.

Good people accustomed to stained-glass windows felt there was something sacrilegious in offering prayers and singing hymns to God in the naked sunlight. There were hostile mobs stirred by less delicate shocks to their sentiments. Sometimes the attacks were instigated by clergymen of the Church of England; sometimes by village politicians. There was a great deal of fear and suspicion abroad of the Catholics, the French and the adherents of the Pretender. A rumor of a landing on the coast would throw the inhabitants of the adjoining country into a panic. Wesley's unusual movements caused reports to circulate that he was a spy, a Catholic or a Jacobite. It was

easy for any one to convince a gang of roughs that he was a dangerous person or, at any rate, a nuisance. There is hardly a month in the first ten years of his outdoor preaching in which Wesley does not record an attack by a mob.

Wesley had a studied technique for handling mobs. It was his rule, he said, confirmed by long experience, always to look a mob in the face. Another of his rules was to strike at a mob through its leader. He knew that the only way to disintegrate a mob is to take away its mind. He never let a mob see that he was afraid. His courage awed the unsophisticated man who could not understand its source.

When he announced his intention one day to preach at Halifax Cross, one of the strongholds of Satan, his audacity set the whole town in an uproar and even his friends advised caution. But he insisted and an immense crowd gathered on the spot "roaring like the waves of the sea." They pelted him with dirt, and a local historian saw blood trickling down his cheek where a stone had struck him, but when he began to speak the crowd listened in silence.

At the Cross at Bolton, in 1748, the crowd began shoving to and fro endeavoring to push Wesley off the steps on which he stood. Once or twice they succeeded, but each time he went up again and resumed his sermon. Stones flew, but Wesley soon perceived signs of Divine interposition on his behalf: "One man was bawling just at my ear when a stone struck him

on the cheek and he was still. A second was forcing his way down to me till another stone hit him on the forehead; it bounded back, the blood ran down, and he came no more. The third, being close to me, stretched out his hand and in the instant a sharp stone came upon the joints of his fingers; he shook his hand, and was very quiet till I concluded my discourse and went away." Although the miraculous nature of these incidents was apparent only to Wesley his coolness could not fail to be noted by all.

The worst riots took place in Staffordshire in the towns of Wednesbury, Dorlaston and Walsall. It does not appear that any one was killed, but many windows in Methodist houses were broken, much furniture smashed, some limbs fractured and bruises inflicted a-plenty. The sport peculiar to this type of mob, that of cutting open featherbeds and strewing the feathers abroad, was already known even in England. As usual in such circumstances, the authorities secretly instigated the outrages which they publicly ignored.

In October, 1743, Wesley was at the scene of the disturbances in Staffordshire. A mob besieged the house in which he was staying, yelling for him to be put out. Wesley requested the leader of the crowd to come into the house. The popular hero rashly accepted the challenge, but quickly succumbed to Wesley's seductive reasoning. The lion was become a lamb. He was asked to bring in one or two of his

more angry companions. "He brought in two who were ready to swallow the ground with rage, but in two minutes they were calm as he." Wesley then went outside to face the crowd. Mounting a chair, he asked, "What do any of you want with me?" They wanted him to go with them to a justice. He agreed to do so, but went on speaking and in a few seconds had them clamoring to spill their blood in his defense. Some two or three hundred, however, still insisted that he go with them to the justice. He consented, and after a two-mile tramp in the rain they arrived at Bentley-Hall, the residence of Mr. Lane, the justice. The excited vanguard announced to the astonished magistrate that they were bringing Mr. Wesley. "What have I to do with Mr. Wesley?" asked his honor. "Go and carry him back again!" and he went to bed. The main body of the mob now came straggling up and began banging on the door. The magistrate's son appeared. What was the disturbance about? They had a charge to make against the Methodists, who sing psalms all day and make folks get up at five in the morning; and what did he advise them to do? "Go home and keep quiet," answered the younger Lane.

Its civic conscience appeased, the mob now took up the homeward march. About fifty acted as Wesley's escort, but they had barely got under way when a fresh mob from Walsall rushed the converted mob and took possession of the prisoner. As they dragged

Wesley from one end of the town of Walsall to the other, he tried to dart into an open door but was pulled back by the hair. He tried it again, but was stopped by the owner of the house. He managed to make a stand in an open doorway and harangued the crowd until his voice failed him. "Kill him!" "Knock out his brains!" they yelled. Wesley now began to pray aloud, and as he did so the leader of the mob turned to him and said: "Sir, I will spend my life for you. Follow me, and not one soul here shall hurt a hair of your head!" At one time a ruffian had his arm raised to strike but lowered it suddenly and only stroked Wesley's head saying: "What soft hair he has." The leader of the mob with two or three of his comrades, one of them a noted prize-fighter, now closed around Wesley and brought him safely back to Wednesbury, "having lost only one flap from my waistcoat and a little skin from one of my hands," he reports. But one of the mob had struck him on the mouth with such force that the blood flowed. Another had hit him on the breast. Yet he felt no more pain "than if they had touched me with a straw."

Wesley was particularly happy at the way he had borne himself that night: "From the beginning to the end I found the same presence of mind as if I had been sitting in my study. But I took no thought for one moment before another; only once it came into my mind that if they should throw me into the river it would spoil the papers that were in my pocket. For

myself I did not doubt but I should swim across, having but a thin coat and a light pair of boots."

The same coolness impressed a mob that tried to break up his meeting at Whitechapel (September 12, 1742) by driving cows among the listeners and throwing stones, one of which struck Wesley between the eyes. But again he felt no pain and, when he had wiped away the blood, went on "testifying that God hath not given us the spirit of fear but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." His behavior disarmed the hoodlums.

At St. Ives, in Cornwall (September 16, 1743), a mob burst into the Methodist meeting-room shouting and striking those that stood in their way. Wesley tried to persuade his people to stand still, but they were deaf to his voice. The uproar increased. He brought the leader of the mob to the desk, receiving a blow on the side of the head but disregarding it. Reasoned with as a man, the leader grew milder and at length undertook to quiet his companions.

At one place the crowd brought a bull which they had been baiting and drove it with the blood dripping from its mouth into the congregation. The bull ran first to one side and then to the other in an intelligent effort not to disturb the meeting. The rabble finally succeeded in forcing the animal up against the table on which Wesley was preaching, and he had to push its head aside so that the blood from its mouth should not drip on his clothes.

On the whole, the mobs that annoyed Wesley and the Methodists were seldom truly ferocious, though they were rough and sometimes dangerous because of their size and stupidity. They were not usually bloodthirsty and seemed to have a dumb sense of the limits beyond which it was not decent for British horseplay to go.

THE SOCIETIES

IT is generally agreed that Wesley originated none of the Methodist rites and regulations but took what was suitable to his purpose in existing societies. Voluntary organizations for vitalizing religion were familiar in Wesley's day. Besides the great Catholic orders of the Jesuits and the friars, there were at the time Wesley was born a great many religious clubs called Societies for the Reformation of Manners. In these, Puritanism was stubbornly trying to stem the great popular reaction against itself. The unenforced blue laws were its weapons. In the fortieth annual report of the Societies for the Reformation of Manners, published in 1735, there is the statement that since their foundation the societies had prosecuted in London and Westminster alone ninety-nine thousand three hundred eighty cases for debauchery and profanity. Seventy or eighty persons were often prosecuted in London and Westminster in a single week on the charge of cursing. The societies closed disorderly houses, had drunkards, Sabbath-breakers and night walkers arrested, and checked up on the closing of markets on Sunday.

Besides acting as a sort of Ku Klux Klan the societies also supported charities and distributed religious books. They aimed to revive the religious feelings of their members; held weekly meetings for prayer, Bible reading and religious discourse. The members were expected to admonish and watch over one another and to strengthen each other against temptation. In their rules we find words, written four years before Wesley was born, that fairly describe a Methodist class meeting: "These persons knowing each other's manner of life, and their particular frailties and temptations, partly by their own familiar conversation and partly from their own experience, can much better inspect, admonish and guard each other than the most careful minister can."

These societies sprang up in every large city of England, and even in Ireland. It was natural that they should become unpopular as they multiplied, and about the middle of the eighteenth century they died out.

The Holy Club founded by Charles Wesley at Oxford in 1729 aimed to improve the religious life of its members in about the same way as did the societies. Charles was the originator of this club, but John, at the time of its formation acting as his father's curate at Wroote, became its leader immediately upon his return to Oxford. Charles and the other members of the group, of whom there were five, tacitly accepted John's authority. He was the oldest, most learned

and most determined. He led, one of the group wrote, not by insisting upon his own views but by allowing all to express their opinions before he stated his own —the superiority of which was then readily seen.

The group of four or five tutors and students soon grew to fifteen. George Whitefield, the great preacher, was one of them. There were ladies too. Miss Potter, the bishop's daughter, is mentioned. It is clear that John Wesley was the magnet that drew the disciples. When he left Oxford for a brief visit to Epworth in May, 1733, there were twenty-seven in the club. On his return a month later only five were left.

The group became the butt of university wits. The profane Oxford rabble called them "methodists" among other things. It was a name that long irritated Wesley, and although he was forced to recognize it, because it was the name in common use, he did so grudgingly. For many years he referred to his followers as "the people called Methodists."

The members of the Holy Club had supper together, confessed their faults to one another, discussed plans for self-perfection and doing good, and aimed, in general, to grow in holiness by using all the "instituted means"; that is, church rites, public prayers, frequent Communion, private prayers and fasting. They wasted no time in trifling employments, helped the uncertain undergraduates with good counsel, the poor with alms, the sick and the criminal with con-

soling words. They "did good" as much as they could. Their punctilious performance of their academic duties was an eccentricity particularly irritating to the Oxford undergraduates, and was probably the reason for the nickname "methodists."

It is clear that Wesley even then had the same fierce desire to direct and control other people's minds that he showed later as the autocrat of a great organization covering all England. His ambition was to influence others personally—by direct contact. There is a letter from his oldest sister Emilia in which she tells with characteristic Wesleyan bluntness that she has no intention of submitting to his direction or of confessing to him or any other mortal. His desire to guide her was an assumption of dominion over his fellow creatures which was not in God's plan, she told him.

Wesley, as has been stated, had caught the infection of holiness from three writers—Thomas à Kempis, Jeremy Taylor and William Law. Law's "Christian Perfection" and "Serious Call," especially had made a deep impression upon him. Law's writings had convinced him that it was impossible to be "half a Christian." "I determined," he writes, "to be all devoted to God, to give Him all my soul, my body, and my substance." His conception of holiness was renunciation of the world, self-denial, fasting, praying, partaking of Communion, helping the unfortunate and thinking always of these matters.

After reading the "Imitation of Christ" of Thomas à Kempis Wesley saw "that simplicity of intention and purity of affection—one design in all we speak and do, and one desire ruling all our tempers—are indeed the wings of the soul, without which she can never ascend to God." He sought after this, he says, from that hour.

Taylor's "Holy Living and Dying" made him resolve to dedicate all his life to God—all his thoughts and words and actions, being thoroughly convinced there was no medium but "that every part of my life (not some only) must either be a sacrifice to God or myself, that is, the devil." In other words, every thought which was not of God was of the devil.

It seems clear that Wesley at the time he ruled the Oxford Holy Club had a fairly distinct ambition to operate outside parochial limits. He hoped to remain in the church, yet free from its control. He intended never to leave Oxford but to surround himself with disciples and gradually extend his influence. His father, who did not expect to live much longer, urged him to apply for the Epworth parish. John objected: "The question is not whether I could do more good to others there or here but whether I could do more good to myself; seeing wherever I can be most holy myself, there I can most promote the holiness of others. But I can improve myself more at Oxford than at any other place."

The elder brother, Samuel, supported his father,

and arguments flew thick and fast—the Wesleys being inordinately fond of disputation. The old minister wished him to take the Epworth rectory so as to keep the family together when he himself was gone. He had labored forty years in the place, improved the parsonage and the premises and it was sad to think that the work he had done with his rude parishioners would be undone by an indifferent successor. Samuel argued that in taking orders John had as good as contracted to take charge of a parish.

John Wesley's replies to his father and brother leave the impression that preservation of his own holiness was his supreme object. He needed the encouragement of like-minded friends, he argued, of whom there were always some at Oxford. There he could give all his attention to cultivating holiness in himself and others. There he was not disturbed by uncongenial persons when he did not want them. At Epworth he would inevitably slip into intemperate habits of sleeping, eating and drinking. The cares of a parish of two thousand souls would overwhelm him. His piety would be dissipated by enforced contact with half-Christians. "They undermine insensibly all my resolutions and quite steal from me the little fervour I have," he wrote. He denied that he had implicitly contracted to take a parish on receiving ordination. He would fulfil his vows if he labored zealously in any part of the Lord's vineyard.

He had in mind even then making all England his

parish. He was travelling to different parts of England afoot and on horseback and preaching every Sunday. In a letter dated in 1732, addressed to the father of young Morgan, who died early of consumption—as a result, it was charged, as has already been noted, of too much fasting and self-mortification—Wesley writes that he has decided to defend himself from the accusations made against him of being to some extent responsible for the young man's death lest he be hindered by the accusations from doing "the work I came into the world for." Four years later, 1736, writing from Georgia to his brother Samuel, he begs him to give him his best thought upon a particular religious subject—the principles of the mystics. "Give them to me as particularly, fully and strongly as your time will permit," he wrote. "They may be of consequence not only to all this province but to nations of Christians yet unborn." He evidently believed in his destiny!

At Oxford he believed he could be a teacher of teachers. Was it not a more extensive benefit to sweeten the fountain than to purify a particular stream? Some years later when the bishop of Bristol objected to Wesley's preaching in his diocese, he replied: "My business on earth is to do what good I can; wherever, therefore, I think I can do most good, there must I stay, so long as I think so; at present I think I can do most good here; therefore, here I stay. Being ordained as Fellow of a College, I was

not limited to any particular cure [parish] but have an indeterminate commission to preach the word of God in any part of the Church of England." In spite of all his debating, Wesley was moved by the arguments of the family to apply for the appointment to Epworth. He did so reluctantly and was not sorry to have his application refused. The appointing powers close to the king had received a hint that this man was too "enthusiastic."

The Holy Club continued to function in Georgia with three of its original members—John and Charles Wesley, Benjamin Ingham—and the new recruit Delamotte, who had attached himself to John Wesley in London. Praying, Communion, fasting, singing, "doing good" went on as before. A number of devout women, including Sophia Hopkey and Miss Bovis and a few men were included in the society. Wesley, as minister of a parish, aimed to be a strict Anglican churchman. He imagined he was following the example and tradition of the primitive church. The Georgians were bewildered and angered by their ascetic and ritualistic pastor. They protested they were Protestants, and accused him of being a Roman Catholic. He was a Puseyite, says Tyerman, a hundred years before Dr. Pusey flourished.

Shortly after his return from Georgia, strongly influenced by Peter Böhler, Wesley joined in the formation of a religious society to preach and prac-

tise the doctrines of the Moravian Church. The society met at first in the house of James Hutton, a bookseller, but soon moved to another in Fetter Lane. The members were mostly Londoners who had come under Böhler's influence. Böhler was the leading spirit as long as he remained in England.

Soon after Wesley's conversion on May 24, 1738, he made a trip to Germany in order to observe the Moravians at their headquarters in Herrnhut. When he returned to England in September the Fetter Lane society had grown from ten to thirty-two members. The following January they had a love-feast at which there were sixty laymen and seven ministers in attendance.

One church after another was closing its doors to Wesley, who was now all afire with his newly found doctrine of salvation by faith. But he could preach only to the Fetter Lane society and at similar meetings.

Toward the end of 1739 Wesley and about twenty-five men and fifty women seceded from the Fetter Lane society as a result of the controversy regarding "stillness." He had bought the Foundery, a dilapidated building in Windmill Street near Finsbury Square, formerly used for casting cannon, but abandoned for about twenty years. The roof had been blown off while damaged guns taken from the French in Marlborough's campaigns were being recast, and it now had a makeshift covering.

Wesley put in a pulpit of rough boards. There were no pews, and all seats were free. Men and women sat apart as they were supposed to have done in the primitive church. These were the arrangements in all Methodist Chapels until four years before Wesley's death.

Societies like the one at the Foundery were formed later at Bristol, Kingswood, Newcastle-upon-Tyne and in all parts of the British Isles. They were called the United Societies, but their affiliation with one another was very loose. Wesley was the bond that united them. He appointed their preachers and leaders. They accounted to him for their conduct. He visited, inspected and examined them on his preaching tours. He "regulated" them.

Each society was divided into classes of about a dozen persons, who met once a week. The class meeting might be held in a kitchen or a drawing-room, in a hayloft, a coalpit or a barn. Anybody might be invited to attend—the serious, the curious or the drifters. The only condition was that they show a desire to be saved from their sins and to flee the wrath to come. Over each class was a leader, appointed by Wesley. The idea of a class leader is said to have been suggested to Wesley by Captain Foy, back from a voyage, when they were discussing the problem of paying the debt on the meeting-house. "Let every one give a penny a week and it will be done," said Captain Foy. Some one objected that many were

too poor to give even a penny a week. "True," replied the captain, "then put ten or twelve of them to me. Let each of these give what they can weekly, and I will supply what is wanting." His plan was simply that of permitting the rich and prosperous to make up the annual deficiency in the church finances.

The class leader had to collect the contributions, to become acquainted with the private life of the members and do all in his power to keep them in the straight path. He was expected to see each person in his class at least once a week, inquire into the state of his or her soul and, where necessary, reprove, exhort or comfort. The sick or disorderly were to be reported to the minister. Money received during the week from classes was handed to a steward.

The members of a class were visited in the beginning by the leaders individually at their homes, but it was found advisable to have them assemble together. The reasons given for the change throw an interesting light upon the circumstances of the early Methodists. Many lived with masters or mistresses who objected to the visits of the leaders. Besides, the members could not be seen alone in their employers' houses, and that made it impossible for the leaders to administer exhortation, reproof or consolation when occasion demanded. It frequently happened too that members contradicted one another when private delinquencies were being investigated and the contra-

dictions could not be cleared up without confronting accused with accuser. Besides, the meetings saved time that would have been spent by the class leader in going from home to home.

The class members were supposed to be persons who had a sense of sin and a desire to be saved. Not all had the assurance of salvation. This certainty was possessed only by those privileged members who formed the bands, or band societies, and who held each other up to a difficult standard of benevolence and purity.

Wesley formed a still more interior circle of adepts, which was to meet with him for an hour every Monday. To them he hoped to be able to unbosom himself without reserve. Secrecy, submission to the minister (in all matters that did not involve religious principle) and contribution to a common fund were the three rules of the adepts. At these meetings all could speak freely. This circle, however, was abandoned. The adepts did not like the way the mere class members looked at them.

Wesley exultingly pointed out that there was no other religious society under heaven which required nothing of candidates for admission except a desire to save their souls. No confession of belief was asked. "Look all around you," he wrote, "you cannot be admitted into the church or society of the Presbyterians, Anabaptists, Quakers or any others unless you hold the same opinion and adhere to the same mode

of worship. The Methodists alone do not insist on your holding this or that opinion; but they think and let think. Neither do they impose any particular mode of worship, but you may continue to worship in your former manner be it what it may. Now, I do not know any other religious society, either ancient or modern, wherein such liberty of conscience is allowed or has been allowed since the days of the apostles." The Methodist was free to think what he pleased, but he was not free to do what he pleased. His conduct was pretty well watched over by his class leader and his fellow Methodists.

In May, 1743, a document styled "The Nature, Design, and General Rules of the United Societies in London, Bristol, Kingswood, and Newcastle-upon-Tyne, etc." was published over the names of John and Charles Wesley. It was the chart by which every Methodist was to steer. He was not to swear, break the Sabbath, buy or sell spirituous liquors or drink them except in case of extreme necessity. He was not to fight or brawl, smuggle or help smuggle, give or take usury, wear gold or costly apparel, or take any diversion "that could not be used in the name of the Lord Jesus." He was not to engage in unprofitable conversation and particularly not speak evil of magistrates and ministers. He was forbidden to sing songs or to read books not tending to the knowledge or love of God. He was not to permit himself to sink into softness or self-indulgence and he was not to

borrow where he saw no probability of repaying. The weaknesses catalogued in this document were of course those most prevalent among the common people of the period.

More significant are the directions for "doing good." The Methodists were to be kind, merciful and do good in every possible way—by helping the poor, visiting the sick and the prisoners, not forgetting their souls. But they were to do good "especially to them that are of the household of faith or groaning so to be"; that is, to the members of the societies. They were to do it by "employing them preferably to others; buying of one another; helping each other in business, and so much the more, because the world will love its own and them only."

These exclusive features characteristic of a Masonic order were further strengthened by the emphatic prohibition—not contained in these rules but published in conference—against marriage with unbelievers or "unawakened" persons. Methodists were solemnly warned that in those instances where the rule was broken "fatal effects" followed. Either the erring Methodist had a "cross for life" or thoughtlessly "turned back to perdition." Those who felt any inclination to break this rule were warned they would be expelled from their society.

To facilitate the weeding out of undesirable members, Wesley instituted a system of tickets distributed every three months to those who had passed every

test. He personally examined each member and if convinced of his "Christian rectitude" gave him the ticket as a certificate of character and a card of admission. It bore a Scriptural picture or text and a date, and served as a Masonic badge, insuring the bearer a welcome in any group to which he came. When closed meetings were held the tickets were cards of admission. Obnoxious members could quietly be separated from a society by withholding the ticket. The Masonic features of the Methodist organization, its insignia, its esoteric rites and rules and the advantages it promised of economic and social support were undoubtedly powerful elements in promoting its growth.

The band societies, composed of those who had the assurance of salvation (in contrast to the class members, who merely desired it), were held up to a higher standard of sanctity. They met once a week and the purpose of their meetings was to give the members an opportunity to confess their faults and sins to one another and pray for one another's redemption.

Each band member stated the faults he had committed in thought, word or deed, and the temptations he had felt since the last meeting. Four questions were asked of every one—"What known sins have you committed since our last meeting? What temptations have you met with? How were you delivered? What have you thought, said or done, of which you doubt whether it be sin or not?" To these was added later:

"Have you nothing you desire to keep secret?" Candidates for admission were asked: "Do you desire that every one of us should tell you from time to time whatsoever is in his heart concerning you? Do you desire that in doing this we should come as close as possible, that we should cut to the quick and search your heart to the bottom? Has no sin inward or outward dominion over you?" It need hardly be added that the bands were divided into male and female, also into married and unmarried.

These questions were first drawn up by Wesley in 1738 for the use of the Moravian band with which he was associated. Methodists have since then expressed their disapproval of these questions which look, as Tyerman puts it, "like a prurient prying into secrets which properly belong to a man and his Maker." But Wesley's purpose was not to provide a method for prying into secrets. He had drawn up the questions because he believed in the therapeutic value of confession for getting rid of irregular or illicit fancies. Bring them out to the light of day, tell them, make them the common property of the band, and their power for evil will end. The evil thought brought out into the open ceases to be "sin." If repeated, it becomes a vulgar disturbance of peace and order; not sin but rebellion.

Methodism, in effect, restored the confessional, which had been lost by Protestants with other rites of the Roman Catholic Church. Wesley based his ac-

tion on the practice of the primitive Christians, who expected every believer to confess his sins before breaking bread in the Eucharist. The custom of confessing to a priest does not appear in the records before the middle of the third century. Before that time, however, it was not a rare occurrence for a Christian in moral distress to lay bare his mind to the holy man of the community versed in Scripture and the ways of God. When Peter of Alexandria recommended confession as one of the means of securing pardon, he made plain that it was not the priest who cured but the penitent who cured himself.

When confession reappears in such diverse places as the Temple service of the Hebrews, among the early Christians, in the Catholic confessional, in the Methodist band societies, in the Wednesday meetings of Christian Scientists and in the psychoanalysis of neurologists, the conclusion seems justified that it is an instinctive human reaction under moral distress, a constitutional necessity to tell everything. Historically, however, there have been other methods of dealing with a bad conscience: there are the methods of repression, of forgetting and of denying.

The advantage of forgetting has been pointed out by Southey in his criticism of the band societies: "Wesley did not perceive the danger of leading his people into temptation, by making them recur to every latent thought of evil; and compelling them to utter with their lips imaginations which might

otherwise have been suppressed within their hearts forever." Wesley himself admits in one of his letters that "Miss F. thought she felt evil before she did, and by that very thought gave occasion to its re-entrance."

The ancient Egyptians went to the opposite extreme—they never confessed or repented but repudiated their sins. Salvation on the day of judgment, they believed, could be won only by categorically denying the commission of any of the crimes officially listed. The living Egyptian, it is said, still clings to the method of denial in the face of absolute proofs of guilt.

Repression is an instinctive effort at forcible forgetting but, as the Freudians have shown, it is disastrously ineffective. Having abandoned the church, the psychoanalysts urge that the doctor take the place of the priest in the confessional.

Another duty enjoined upon Methodists, and especially on band members, was to rebuke sin wherever it was encountered. "Reprove all that sin in your sight." Fulfilment of this duty provided much of the zest of being "good."

The Methodist societies were definitely an organization of the elect. Wesley "put away" on his visits of inspection all those who were found unacceptable. Reasons for the expulsion of sixty-four members from the society at Chowden are given in his *Journal*, March, 1743. Two were expelled for cursing

and swearing; two for habitual Sabbath-breaking; seventeen for drunkenness; two for retailing spirituous liquors; three for quarrelling and brawling; one for beating his wife; three for habitual, wilful lying; three for railing and evil-speaking; one for idleness and laziness; twenty-nine for lightness and carelessness. From the last item we infer that a religious demeanor was indispensable if one desired to remain a member in good standing.

Watch nights and love-feasts heightened the feeling of fellowship and of belonging. The colliers at Kingswood had been in the habit before their conversion of spending Saturday night together in the alehouse. After their rebirth they met in the school-house, substituting prayer and hymns for the jigs and songs of former days. When this was reported to Wesley he was delighted with the resemblance which he at once noted to the watch nights or "vigilia" of the primitive Christians, who were known to spend whole nights together in singing and praying. Instead of suppressing the rite, as he was expected to do, Wesley attended a session, preached a sermon and remained singing and praying with the miners until past midnight. He put watch night on the program of every society, on the Friday nearest the full moon. Charles Wesley composed some appropriate hymns and the first watch nights commonly ended with "Oft have we passed the guilty night" or "Harken to the solemn voice."

It was objected that the people were brought together not by truly religious motives but by the novelty of these ceremonies. But Wesley found, as always, satisfactory justification for a custom which had the much-coveted sanction of the primitive Christians. What difference does it make, he argued, whether the people are brought together by the novelty of the thing or whether it is the stillness of the night that helps to impress their minds, so long as they are impressed, and sinners are brought to repentance? If he could reasonably assume that either by the novelty of the custom or by any other accidental circumstance it was in his power to save a soul from death, would he be clear before God if he did not "snatch that brand out of the burning"?

The love feast, too, was a rite based upon the practice of the ancient Christians—the "agape." Three evenings every quarter the people met to eat together. The men one night, the women another, and both together on a third. The food was only plain cake and water. They spent the time chiefly in relating their religious experiences and in singing. At first only band members were admitted, but later all who could show a quarterly society ticket; and sometimes also others upon the written permission of the presiding preacher.

The love-feasts and the watch nights helped to cement the Methodists together more closely. Opportunity was given indeed for the cultivation of other

affections than the love of God. However, this is no valid objection, since these affections will arise under any circumstances. Irregularities are unavoidable, and Wesley, with resolute statesmanship, disregarded the horrified outcries of prim Anglicans. His work was to weld a great mass of industrial workers into a compact body with a common standard of morals and belief. If young people fell in love at religious festivals it did not frighten him. The Anglican critics of Methodism raised an outcry of "sensation and passion." But the comatose respectability of the Anglican Church was just what the Methodists had run away from. The miners and weavers wanted their religion to be a governing influence in every moment of their lives. Wesley gave them such a religion, a religion that made them one in the love of Christ.

Wesley was criticised for withdrawing his followers from the fellowship of the English Church. He retorted that the fellowship they spoke of had never existed: "Look east, west, north or south, name what parish you please, is Christian fellowship there? Rather are not the bulk of the parishioners a mere rope of sand? What Christian connection is there between them? What intercourse in spiritual things? What watching over each other's souls? What a mere jest is it, then, to talk of destroying what never was." Those elements of a true fellowship lacking in the established church, however, were supplied by Meth-

odism. The humblest Methodist was watched over, advised, exhorted. He was no longer alone. He had not only the never-failing presence of his Saviour but also the human sympathy of his class, his band, his society, his class leader and his minister.

Wesley took an extraordinary interest in the dress of the Methodists. He expressed regret toward the end of his life that he had not made the Methodists wear a distinct costume as the Quakers and the Moravians did. He might have done so, he laments. He might have said: "This is our style of dress. If you join with us you must dress as we do, but you need not join us unless you please." But he let his opportunity slip.

No band tickets were given to those women who persisted in wearing superfluous ornaments—callyashes, highheads or large bonnets. Wesley preached with much earnestness on this subject. "Wear no gold," he urged, "no pearls or precious stones; use no curling of hair; buy no velvets, no silks, no fine linen, no superfluities, no mere ornaments, though ever so much in fashion. Wear nothing of a glaring color, or which is in any kind gay, glistening or showy, nothing made in the very height of the fashion, nothing apt to attract the attention of the bystanders. I do not advise women to wear rings, earrings, necklaces, lace (of whatever kind or color) or ruffles, which by little and little may easily shoot out from one to twelve inches deep. Neither do I advise men

to wear colored waistcoats, shining buckles or buttons, either on their coats, or on their sleeves, any more than gay, fashionable or expensive perukes. It is true these are little, very little things, which are not worth defending; therefore, give them up, let them drop, throw them away without another word."

He objected to gay and costly apparel because it served its evident purpose of making men and women attractive to each other. "Did you not know this would be the natural consequence of your elegant adorning?" he thunders. "Did you not desire, did you not design it should? Meantime you do not yourself escape the snare which you spread for others. You kindle a flame which at the same time consumes both yourself and your admirers. And it is well if it does not plunge both you and them into the flames of hell."

He was trying to sweep back the ocean. The Methodists had grown rich, and with prosperity came luxury in dress as in everything else.

Wesley in old age saw with remarkable clearness the opposition between wealth and religion. Methodism, he remarked, has a tendency to undermine and destroy itself. It causes diligence and frugality, which must in the natural course of things beget riches. Riches beget pride, love of the world and a spirit that is destructive of Christianity. Christianity thus saps its own foundations. Is there no way to prevent this? "There is one way, and there is no other under

heaven. If those who gain all they can, and save all they can, will likewise give all they can, then the more they gain the more they will grow in grace, and the more treasure they will lay up in heaven."

Here we have a principle which on the whole has received wide approval since Wesley's death, and in an age when hoards of wealth surpass anything Wesley could have imagined possible.

GOVERNING THE HELPERS

WESLEY's conservative prejudices had caused him at first to oppose "lay preaching." Laymen were permitted only to expound the Scriptures. While he was absent at Bristol, as before noted, Thomas Maxfield began preaching at the Foundery. Wesley hurried to London much perturbed. The man certainly had a natural gift for exhorting, Wesley learned when he heard him. "It is the Lord!" said Wesley, and consoled himself by recalling that lay preaching was a practice in the primitive church, that ordinary preachers among the ancient Jews were not priests but scribes, that there had been no objection against Jesus' preaching, although he was a layman. The women, it appears, were particularly interested in the young exhorters. Aged Mrs. Canning of Eversham told him about another, Thomas Westell: "Stop him at your peril," she said. "He preaches the truth, and the Lord owns him as truly as He does you or your brother." John Cennick, according to some authorities, had preceded Maxfield. Howel Harris, another, had been conducting a revival of his own independently in Wales but joined with Wesley. There

were forty of them in 1744. At the time of Wesley's death there were over three hundred itinerant and a thousand local preachers.

Wesley ruled these men with an iron hand, lovingly but firmly. They were mechanics by training and he was the only scholar among them. He knew and they knew that in all matters of learning he was their master and held in honor by the great world outside of Methodism. Hence, he spoke to them with authority. But they had the enthusiasm which ignores hardship and death and stops at no obstacle. He did what he could to make up deficiencies in their education and they made great progress, for many were men of great natural ability. Following the courses of reading he prescribed they became as well educated as the majority of the clergy. There was not one who could not have passed a stiff examination in "practical experimental divinity." He regarded Thomas Walsh as the best Biblical scholar he had ever known; another, John Downes, was naturally "as great a genius as Sir Isaac Newton"; and Joseph Cownley was "one of the best preachers in England."

The regular clergy of the Anglican Church looked down upon Wesley's lay preachers with a sense of superiority—which was their only advantage. One of the clergymen told a lay preacher in the north country that he was not qualified to preach. The preacher retorted: "Qualified! You say that? Why, without

your gown you dare na, and without your book you could na, and without your pay you would na; and I do without all three!"

The pay of the laymen who were local preachers was at first nothing. They were lodged and fed by the members, but went in rags. Later they received three pounds a quarter for clothing and books. They were better cared for when they became itinerants. It was to take care of the sons of the traveling preachers that Wesley founded the school at Kingswood.

The itinerants pursued their calling in utter disregard of their own lives or safety, and the physical hardships they endured not infrequently led to serious illness and death. They travelled twenty, thirty, forty miles and preached two and three times a day. Following schedules made out by Wesley they were romantic figures in that trainless age. It was a great event in village life when one of the long-haired preachers on horseback appeared, bringing news as well as tracts and books from the outside world. Their high collars were chosen as a protection from missiles. Clothes and books were carried in a bag, and each man had a spade with which to dig himself out of the snow. Robbers let them alone, not from religious scruples but because the preachers had nothing worth taking. Mobs pelted them with mud, stones and vegetables, beat and threw them into ponds.

John Nelson, after having been knocked senseless by a brick, tried to resume his preaching when he

regained consciousness. He was then struck on the head and breast, trampled upon and left for dead, but recovered. Thomas Mitchell thus quaintly relates his blessed sufferings:

"On Sunday, August 7, last, I preached at Wrangle, at five in the morning as usual; about six, two constables came and carried me to a public house where I was kept till near four in the afternoon. Then one of them said he would go and ask the minister whether they might not let me go [the reference is to a minister of the Church of England]. Upon his return, they brought me out to a large mob, who carried me and threw me into a standing water; and as often as I tried to come out, they pitched me in again. At last some of them said I should come out, and kept the others off, till I got up the bank. I found myself very happy all the time; for I knew I was in the Lord's hands. I got back to the house where I lodged, and went to bed. But in less than an hour the mob came again, broke open the doors of the house and the chamber and dragged me away with them. They carried me to a great pond which was railed round, being ten or twelve foot deep. Then four men took me up by my legs and arms. I felt the flesh shrink a little at first, but it was soon over, and I did not care whether I lived or died; just as it pleased the Lord. They swung me backward and forward two or three times and then threw me as far as they could into the water. The fall took away

my senses so that I felt nothing more. But some that did not care to have me drowned, when I came above water, catching hold of my clothes with a long pole pulled me out. I lay senseless for some time. When I came to myself, I saw many people about me; one of them helped me up and bade me go with him. He brought me to a little house and put me to bed; but I had not lain long, before the mob came again, pulled me out of bed, and drove me before them, almost naked, to the end of the parish, where they left me. I made shift to get on to a place three miles off, where I got to bed again and slept in peace."

The rigorous rules Wesley made governing the acceptance of these men to preach indicate that there was no lack of candidates. Those who thought they were moved by the Holy Ghost were put through a searching examination as to whether they had the love of God in them, desired nothing but God and were holy in all manner of social intercourse; whether they had gifts as well as grace; whether they could speak, whether they had good sound understanding and a correct idea of salvation by faith. Had they actually converted anybody to God by their preaching? They were asked: "Have you faith in Christ? Have you read the 'Plain Account'? The 'Appeals' [Wesley's tracts]? Do you know the rules of the society? Of the bands? Do you keep them? Do you take no snuff, tobacco, drams? Have you read the 'Minutes of the Conference'? Are you willing to con-

form to them? Have you considered the 'Rules of a Helper'; especially the first, tenth and twelfth? Are you determined to employ all your time in the work of God? Will you preach every morning and evening, endeavoring not to speak too long or too loud?"

If the candidate answered satisfactorily he was admitted to four years' trial. Marriage during the four years' probation automatically excluded him. "Exhorters" might be licensed for a year by the superintendent of a district.

The "Rules of a Helper," or preacher, including those above referred to, are of great interest. They were:

1. Be diligent. Never be unemployed a moment. Never be triflingly employed. Never while away time; neither spend any more time at any place than is strictly necessary.
2. Be serious. Avoid all lightness, jesting and foolish talk.
3. Converse sparingly and cautiously with women, particularly with young women.
4. Take no step toward marriage without first consulting with your brethren.
5. Believe evil of no one; unless you see it done.
6. Speak evil of no one.
7. Tell every one what you think wrong in him, and that plainly as soon as may be; else it will fester in your heart.
8. Do not affect the gentleman. You may have no more to do with this character than with that of a dancing

master. A preacher of the Gospel is the servant of all.

- 9. Be ashamed of nothing but sin.
- 10. Be punctual. Do every thing exactly at the time. And in general, do not mend our rules, but keep them; not for wrath, but for conscience' sake.
- 11. You have nothing to do but to save souls.
- 12. Act in all things, not according to your own will but as a son in the Gospel. As such, it is your part to employ your time in the manner which we direct; partly in preaching and visiting from house to house; partly in reading, meditation, and prayer. In short, keep busy and obey our rules!

The superintendents of circuits or "assistants," as Wesley called them, supervised the preachers within their circuits, visited the classes and the bands quarterly and gave out tickets. They presided at watch nights and love-feasts, admitted and expelled members of the society and the bands, saw that every society was provided with Methodist literature. "Primitive Physic" particularly ought to be in every house. "Oh, why is this not regarded!" exclaims Wesley in issuing his orders. He makes the interesting request that each superintendent should send him a circumstantial account of every remarkable conversion and every remarkable death. He complains that not half the assistants have fulfilled all their duties.

The most astonishing thing about Wesley's management is the minuteness with which he visualized the duties of every subordinate and the explicit detail

of his directions to them. These were not perfunctory instructions. His rules were reflections of himself. What he enjoined upon his helpers he had done or was doing. Every one of the helpers was to be as far as possible another John Wesley.

He undertook, as has been pointed out, to educate the helpers. He had classes in oratory. Some one said they had no books. "I will give each of you, as fast as you will read them, books to the value of five pounds," he said. "And I desire the assistants [the superintendents of circuits] would take care that all the large societies provide our works, or at least the 'Notes,' for the use of preachers." He referred to his own "Notes on the New Testament."

The preachers were to rise at four, as he did. From four to five in the morning and from five to six in the evening they were to meditate, pray and read the Scriptures with the "Notes"; and "the closely practical parts of what we have published."

From six in the morning till twelve (allowing an hour for breakfast) they were to read in order, with much prayer, "first, The Christian Library and the other books which we have published in prose and verse, and then those which we have recommended in our rules of Kingswood school."

To those who said they read the Bible only and that they had no taste for reading in general, he replied: "Contract a taste for reading by use, or return to your trade."

He thus pursued the policy that has been followed by other founders of sects—that of establishing his own writings as authoritative alongside the Sacred Scriptures. His tracts were to be read for the best statement on every important point of principle. When he advised his helpers to preach against evil-speaking, he added: “Read in every society the sermon on ‘Evil speaking.’” When he urged them to oppose smuggling, he added: “Read to them and diligently disperse among them the ‘Word to a Smuggler.’” When he referred to the need of combating bribery at elections, he added: “And everywhere read the ‘Word to a Freeholder,’ and disperse it with both hands.” When he agitated against showy clothes, he added: “Let every assistant read the ‘Thoughts upon Dress’ at least once a year in every large society.” He set up a standard of authority—a key to the Scriptures: His “Notes on the New Testament” and his four volumes of sermons are so regarded in the Methodist Church to-day.

The preachers were instructed how to plan their sermons; how to preach them, and how to pronounce the words. “In repeating the Lord’s Prayer say ‘hallowed’ not ‘hollowed.’” “Don’t ramble,” he tells them. “Choose the plainest texts, and sing no hymns of your own composing; print nothing without my approbation.” “Frequently read and enlarge upon a portion of the ‘Notes on the New Testament.’”

The stewards (or treasurers) were no less minutely directed than the helpers. Every steward also is to be another John Wesley. The stewards' chief work was to receive subscriptions and contributions and pay bills, but they were directed also "to tell the preachers in love if they think anything amiss either in their doctrine or life."

The methodical, careful Wesley and the never-failing gentle-souled Wesley appear together in the "Rules for the Stewards." They were to be frugal, save everything that could be saved honestly, contract no debts and pay everything within the week. But they were also instructed: "Give none that asks relief either an ill word or an ill look. Do not hurt them if you cannot help them. Expect no thanks from man."

On June 25, 1744, Wesley invited a few clergymen and a few lay assistants to meet him in conference. He had prepared an agenda, and the conference enacted all his proposals. During his lifetime this was done annually. His conferences were like the faculty meetings of an energetic college president. He assembled his assistants to hear their views and announce his decisions. This was inevitable, for on the one side was a man of profound conviction, a single aim and the advantage of a broad education; on the other, were a number of half-educated mechanics who had been invited by Wesley to enter upon

what was to them a brilliant and romantic career. The conference regularly registered Wesley's decrees.

When the organization was in full swing, however, it began to appear to free-born Britons here and there that they were helping to build up a rather un-British autocracy. They began to ask by what right their autocrat ruled them and to demand a voice in the government of the organization.

Wesley's method of dealing with such inquiries and with every sign of disaffection was swift and sure. "No founder of a sect or order, no legislator, ever understood the art of preserving his authority more perfectly than Wesley," wrote Southey. Rebellion had no chance against him. Wesley the autocrat, however, was unique in this. He did everything "in love." He wrote a letter of enlightenment to the friend of a recalcitrant preacher who had been summarily dismissed, which is still instructive:

My dear Brother: You seem to me not to have well considered the "Rules of a Helper," or the rise of Methodism. It pleased God by me to awaken first my brother, and then a few others; who severally desired of me as a favor that I would direct them in all things. After my return from Georgia, many were both awakened and converted to God. One and another and another of these desired to join with me as sons in the Gospel, to be directed by me. I drew up a few plain rules (observe there was no conference in being!) and permitted them to join with me on these conditions.

Whoever, therefore, violates these conditions, particularly that of being directed by me in the work, does *ipso facto* (by the act itself) disjoin himself from me. This brother M. has done (but cannot see that he has done amiss), and he would have it a common cause; that is, he would have the preachers do the same. He thinks "they have a right so to do." So they have. They have a right to disjoin themselves from me whenever they please. But they cannot, in the nature of the thing, join with me any longer than they are directed by me. And what if fifty of the present preachers disjoined themselves? What should I lose thereby? Only a great deal of labour and care, which I do not seek, but endure because no one else either can or will.

Wesley pursues the same line of reasoning in replying to interpellations by preachers in his conference. His replies are neatly and accurately constructed; his logic is unanswerable.

"What power," it was asked, "is this which you exercise over the preachers and the societies?" It was the power that came from their voluntary association with him, he replied. The preachers had joined him on condition of obeying his directions. Nothing stood in the way of their leaving whenever they saw fit. The same was true of the conference. At one time he had issued a general call but had seen cause to retract it. He had sent for the conferees of his own free choice, to advise, not to govern him. That power arose from his undisputed right to admit or exclude as he saw fit to or from the societies under his care,

of removing stewards, of receiving or rejecting helpers, and of instructing them when, where and how to help him.

He had not sought this power. It was a burden laid upon him, which he dare not lay down. "But if you can tell me any one, or any five men, to whom I may transfer this burden, who can and will do just what I do now, I will heartily thank both them and you."

But this was shackling free-born Englishmen! some of the preachers cried. This was setting himself up as a Pope! They demanded a free conference, a meeting of all the preachers in which everything should be determined by the majority. Wesley's reply was: "It is possible after my death something of this kind may take place, but not while I live."

It was nonsense to talk of shackling men who could leave him when they pleased. He a Pope! The Pope affirms that those who do not believe what he says are damned. He, Wesley, said nothing remotely resembling that. Preachers could leave him with absolute freedom. If they chose to remain, they were bound to submit to his direction.

It should not be forgotten that Wesley spoke when the industrial revolution was just gathering momentum; industrialism was finding its stride; the logic which he so neatly formulated had not been examined or tested by events. A contract may be voluntarily entered into by workmen and yet be automatically

altered by the lapse of time, so that though they had perfect freedom to come in or stay out at the beginning, that freedom sooner or later has been lost. The men may have assumed a thousand obligations conditional upon their continuance in the same employment, or they may have become old and decrepit in the service upon which they entered as carefree youths.

Wesley showed that he knew as well as any Cromwell how to deal with disaffection. He was as swift in the logic of action as of thought. A number of members in the Kingswood society, led by John Cennick, having been affected by ideas about predestination and election wished to discuss them and, if possible, commit the society to Calvinism. Cennick owed his position entirely to John Wesley. He was one of the masters in the Kingswood school and also employed as a lay preacher. In Wesley's absence he encouraged criticism of the leader and took measures to form those who were in favor of Calvinistic doctrines into a separate society. Wesley, angered by the ingratitude and disloyalty of one whom he had regarded with peculiar affection, accused Cennick in an open meeting. The controversy, however, becoming heated, he proposed an adjournment.

When Cennick and his followers appeared at the adjourned meeting, they were amazed to see Wesley, instead of reopening the debate, pull out a paper and read: "By many witnesses it appears that several

members of the band society in Kingswood have made it their practice to scoff at the teaching of Mr. John and Charles Wesley; that they have censured and spoken evil of them behind their backs at the very time they professed love and esteem to their faces; that they have studiously endeavored to prejudice other members of that society against them, and, in order thereto, have belied and slandered them in divers instances. Therefore, not for their opinions, nor for any of them (whether they be right or wrong), but for the causes abovementioned, viz., for their scoffing at the word of God, for their talebearing, backbiting and evil-speaking, for their dissembling, lying and slandering, I, John Wesley, by the consent and approbation of the band society in Kingswood, do declare the persons abovementioned to be no longer members thereof. Neither will they be so accounted until they shall openly confess their fault and thereby do what in them lies to remove the scandal they have given."

He gave them a week's time to decide. Cennick refused to admit that he had done wrong and Wesley announced that the members must choose between him and Cennick. About one third of the society walked out with Cennick.

By drastic purges of this sort Wesley established his undisputed authority in the Methodist organization. Julia Wedgwood, one of his acutest biographers, has well observed: "For a period equal to the

lifetime of many great men, Wesley moved among subjects not only without a rival but without a possible successor."

The shifting of preachers from one place to another helped to fortify his prestige, since no preacher stayed long enough in any place to get a personal following. The frequent change, Wesley declared, was necessary to keep society and preacher awake. He laid the arrested development of the Glasgow society in 1774 to the fact that one preacher stayed there two or three months at a time preaching *only* three or four evenings a week, and Sunday mornings. "Can a Methodist minister," he asks, "preserve either bodily health or spiritual life with this exercise? And if he is but half alive, what will the people be?"

He asserted that it was impossible for a minister facing the same congregation week after week, year after year, to interest them. He could not do it himself. No better device can be imagined for preserving a centralized authority than such a constant tearing up of ministerial plants by the roots before they can attach themselves firmly in any locality. The shifting of ministers had that effect whether or not Wesley consciously intended it.

MARRIAGE

WHEN Wesley was forty-eight years old, a year and a half after Grace Murray had become Mrs. Bennet, he married. He was determined to give Charles no opportunity to interfere this time. He sent no letters around informing the societies and the preachers of his intention. He asked nobody's consent. He had no doubt this time as to the rightness of his course.

"I am not more sure that God sent His Son into the world," he wrote, "than that it is His will I should marry."

He summoned Charles and informed him of his purpose but prudently kept back the name of the bride. Charles was thunderstruck. His amazement increased when one of their friends, Ned Perronet, told him the fortunate lady was Mrs. Vazeille. He had some acquaintance with her; she had travelled with him and his wife; but he had never suspected her as a possible destroyer of Methodism.

Mrs. Vazeille was seven years younger than John Wesley, the widow of Anthony Vazeille, a London merchant, with "either three or four children." Her father was also a London merchant named Goldhawk.

Wesley had hurt his ankle by slipping on the ice on London Bridge and had taken a coach and driven to Mrs. Vazeille's house, where he spent a week partly in prayer, reading and conversation, partly in writing "A Hebrew Grammar" and "Lessons for Children." It was while recovering from an illness that he had proposed marriage to Grace Murray, his nurse. He now proposed to Mrs. Vazeille under similar circumstances.

Only four days before the slip on the ice Wesley had spoken to the single men of the Methodist society on marriage. He showed them "on how many accounts it is good for those who have received that gift [of single blessedness] from God to remain single for the kingdom of heaven's sake, unless where a particular case might be an exception to the general rule." The fact that he directed the coach to drive to Mrs. Vazeille's house suggests that the exceptional case was already in sight when he spoke.

The day before the wedding, Wesley explained to an audience at the Foundery how his plunge into matrimony had occurred: "At the Foundery," wrote Charles, "heard my brother's lamentable apology which made us all hide our faces." That same morning Charles had preached a mournful sermon and the whole congregation, infected by his sorrow, had wept. About a week later, when John and his wife called upon Charles on the way to the preaching-house, Charles saluted the bride and stayed to hear

John preach, but ran away when John began again on the subject of his marriage.

Charles was peevish. He had himself married one of three inseparable sisters (Sally, Betsy and Peggy Gwynne) whom he had not been able to shake apart. He suffered from too much company. The entries in his diaries (in shorthand) reveal his moroseness: "Heard my brother exhort the society. I thought he misapplied his subject in trifles." Twelve days later: "Heard my brother in the society. A poor society, indeed! His words were quite trifling."

He made some effort to love his brother's wife as a Christian. On March 15 he writes: "Called on my sister, kissed her and assured her I was perfectly reconciled to her and to my brother." On March 19: "I brought my wife and sister together and took all opportunities of showing the latter my sincere respect and love." May 12: "I met my sister at the horse fair and behaved to her as such." (He means as a brother!) The will to love was there, but somehow he could not get started. Mrs. John Wesley knew his difficulty but made no effort at all to love him.

John, for his part, transferred some of his resentment over his troubles with his wife to Charles. The worse the marriage turned out the more impatient he became with the brother who had saved Methodism by preventing his marriage to the woman he had really loved, as he thought.

"You told William Briggs," he wrote to Charles,

"that you never declined going to any place because my wife was there. I am glad of it. If so, I have hope we may sometime spend a little time together. Why do you omit giving the sacrament in Kingswood? What is reading prayers at Bristol in comparison with this? I am sure, in making this vehement alteration, you never consulted with me."

"Some of our preachers here have peremptorily affirmed," he wrote again, "that you are not as strict as me, that you neither practice nor enforce, nor approve of the rules of the bands [condemning self-indulgence and recommending fasting as a means of grace]. I think it would be of use if you wrote without delay and explained yourself at large.

"What I have desired any time these ten years is either that you would act in connexion or never say you do. Either leave off professing or begin performing. O Brother, pretend not longer to the thing that is not; you do not, will not, act in concert with me. Not since I was married only (putting it on that is a mere finesse) but for ten years last past and upwards you have no more acted in connexion with me than Mr. Whitefield has done. I would to God you would begin to do it now; or else talk no more *as if you did*. My love to my sister. Adieu."

On this letter Charles wrote the comment: "Brother, October 31, 1753. Trying to bring me under his yoke."

Wesley had no intention of letting his marriage

interfere with his evangelism. "I cannot understand," he had written, "how a Methodist preacher can answer it to God to preach one sermon less in a married than in a single state. In this respect surely it remaineth that they who have wives be as though they had none." He was quoting from Paul's Letter to the Corinthians. He set about following Paul's advice. On March 4, two weeks after his marriage, he was off.

Mrs. Wesley had ideas of the duties of husbands which she did not get from St. Paul. She made a brave effort at first to share the hardships of a travelling preacher. In August she and her daughter toured Cornwall with Wesley and back to London. The next spring, beginning in March, they travelled through Birmingham, Manchester, Bristol, Leeds, Epworth, Grimsby, Hull, York, Durham, Newcastle, Penrith, Cockermouth and Whitehaven. In July they set sail for Dublin and wandered through Ireland until October.

Toil and privation were prescribed in Wesley's plan of life. He saw no reason for omitting them from the lives of those who were governed by him. He wrote to a friend that the more his wife travelled the better she bore it. "It gives us yet another proof that whatever God calls us to he will fit us for; so that we have no need to take thought for the morrow."

His wife somehow could not get his point of view. When the dinner or the room did not suit her she said so. A hard bed, a shower of rain, a dirty road

were a hard bed, a shower of rain and a dirty road to her. She did not relate them to God's plans for her good. Wesley himself never fretted, never was discontented when alone. Everything was providentially ordered for him. To have persons around him fretting and murmuring at everything was, he said, like tearing the flesh off his bones. He was God's happy knight of the road when alone. This complaining family at his ears, Mrs. Wesley and her daughter, darkened the sun.

To the onlooker, Mrs. Wesley's objections to the life she was leading do not seem altogether unreasonable. We get a few glimpses from Wesley's *Journal* of what she met with on the road: "March 15, 1752, I took horse with my wife and daughter [his step-daughter]. The tiles were rattling from the houses on both sides but hurt not us." "Tuesday 17, the rain continued without intermission till we came to Euston. Soon after we set out from thence, it was succeeded by so vehement a wind, as, on Broadway Hill, often drove us clear out of the path, and was ready to carry away both horse and rider." They crossed to Ireland, a trip that usually took twenty-four hours, but on account of head winds they were on the water five days.

"My wife and Jenny were extremely sick," he wrote to a friend, "particularly when we had a rolling sea; but a few days, I trust, will restore their strength. They are already much better."

His prognostication was correct. Mrs. Wesley recovered her strength fully, it appears, for the Methodist preacher, John Hampson, surprised her on this Irish tour displaying it in a startling manner. He related the incident to his son, one of Wesley's early biographers, thus:

"Jack, I was once on the point of committing murder. Once when I was in the north of Ireland, I went into a room and found Mrs. Wesley foaming with fury. Her husband was on the floor, where she had been trailing him by the hair of his head; and she herself was still holding in her hand venerable locks which she had plucked up by the roots. I felt as though I could have knocked the soul out of her."

Mrs. Wesley was jealous, and she had as much provocation as a woman who did not understand such a husband required. His correspondence with Sarah Ryan was in an amorous tone which would have angered any wife. Yet he was devoid of wrong intentions. Wesley was unable to analyze his emotions. His enthusiasm for souls blended with personal interest, but his conscious motives were irreproachable and he kept the course of his conduct true.

Sarah Ryan had been appointed by Wesley as housekeeper at the preachers' house in Kingwood. Once when she was presiding at the head of the dining-table with a number of preachers sitting around it, Mrs. Wesley broke out in a loud voice: "The —— now serving you has three husbands living!"

This was true! The first was a corkcutter, the second an Irish sailor and the third an Italian sailor. They had left her in turn. Shortly after his wife's outbreak, Wesley wrote to Sarah Ryan consolingly: "My dear sister—How did you feel yourself under your late trial? Did you find no stirring of resentment? . . . I never saw you so much moved as you appeared that evening . . . a variety of conflicting passions, love, sorrow, desire, with a kind of despair, were easy to be read in your countenance. . . . Was your soul all the time calmly stayed on God? The conversing with you, either by speaking or writing, is an unspeakable blessing to me. I cannot think of you without thinking of God. Others often lead me to Him; but it is, as it were, going round about; you bring me straight into His presence. Therefore, whoever warns me against trusting you, I cannot refrain; as I am clearly convinced He calls me to it. I am your affectionate brother."

Were these the words of a cunning hypocrite? Not at all! Wesley was as sincere, as pure-minded a man as ever lived. Emotion was the breath of his life, but he did not know it. He was sentimental. He was fond of "novelizing" episodes in his life. He wrote out the romance with Sophia Hopkey at length. He did the same with the Grace Murray affair, and appended a long poem full of self-pity. Dr. Rigg remarks: "He was naturally a woman-worshipper, susceptible almost to weakness in presence of female attractions,

but always delicate and honourable in his feelings and conduct."

His wife, searching his pockets, found the letter to Sarah Ryan unsealed. He told Sarah in another letter that he had never seen his wife in such a temper: "God broke her heart." He goes on benignly with his spiritual admonition: "I want you to live like an angel here below, or rather, like the Son of God. Woman, walk thou as Christ walked; then you cannot but love and pray for your affectionate brother."

Mrs. Wesley left him. She returned, however, and they went on as before. Wesley insisted upon his freedom, his right to associate or converse with whom he pleased. "Dear Molly," he wrote his wife, "I was much concerned the night before I left London at your unkind and unjust accusations. You accused me of unkindness, cruelty and what not, because I insist upon choosing my own company! Because I insist upon conversing, by speaking or writing, with those whom I (not you) judge proper. For more than seven years this has been a bone of contention between you and me, as it is so still. For I will not, I cannot, I dare not give it up . . . it is my right by all the laws of God and man . . . do not continue to trouble yourself and me, and to disturb the children of God by still grasping at a power which must be denied you by him who is nevertheless your truly affectionate husband."

This appeal had no effect upon the warlike Mrs.

Wesley. She pilfered his papers and put garbled extracts from his correspondence in the hands of his unscrupulous theological opponents—the Calvinistic Methodists. Wesley wrote her another letter which is unusual for him in its harsh self-assertion: “At length know me and know yourself. Your enemy I cannot be; but let me be your friend. Suspect me no more, asperse me no more, provoke me no more. Do not any longer contend for mastery, for power, for money or praise. Be content to be a private, insignificant person, known and loved by God and me. Of what importance is your character to mankind; if you were buried just now or never lived, what loss would it be to the cause of God? Attempt no more to abridge me of my liberty which I claim by the laws of God and man. Leave me to be governed by God and my own conscience. Then shall I govern you with gentle sway, and show that I do indeed love you even as Christ the church.”

Mrs. Wesley, besides showing Wesley’s letters and private papers to his enemies, watched him constantly so that nobody could call on him without her knowledge and permission. She demanded an account of where he had been and whom he had seen. She browbeat and harassed the servants, to Wesley’s great disgust. She used coarse language “as befits none but a fishwife,” and broke into foul, unmannerly language when any of his friends attempted to defend him against her slanders. Wes-

ley's faults were her standing topic of conversation. She lied to his face, accusing him, for instance, of beating her, and of riding in to Kingswood with Sarah Ryan. She lied habitually upon indifferent matters.

Wesley demanded that all this cease if they were to live together in peace. He told her plainly that she was fighting against herself. "You are frustrating your own purpose, if you want me to love you. You take just the wrong way. No one was ever *forced* to love another. It cannot be; love can only be won by *softness*; foul means avail nothing. But you say, 'I have tried fair means, and they did not succeed.' If they do not, none will. Then you have only to say, 'This evil is of the Lord; I am clay in His hands.'"

The series of separations and reunions of Wesley and his wife are hard to keep track of. In 1760 they were separated. John writes to Charles from Ireland inquiring: "Where and how is my wife?" In 1762 they were together. Mrs. Wesley had been ill. Wesley writes: "My wife gains ground." In 1766 he set out for Newcastle with his wife and her daughter. In August, 1768, he hurried from a conference at Bristol on receiving word that she was dangerously ill at the Foundery, in London. But in December she had retreated to Newcastle. "I hear nothing from or of our friend at Newcastle," he writes to Charles. She came back, however, and in 1771 left again. Wesley entered in his *Journal* laconically: "For what cause

I know not to this day—set out for Newcastle, purposing never to return. Non eam reliqui. Non dimisi. Non revocabo." [I haven't left her. I have not sent her away. I shall not call her back.]

But in June, 1772, they are riding through Yorkshire together in his chaise. In 1775 there was a coolness, for he writes to Charles asking whether his "friend" has taken a house in Bristol. In 1777 they are emphatically apart. He writes to her, laying down the terms upon which he will consent to a reconciliation. His greatest grievance is her reading distorted extracts from his letters to a group of his theological opponents who promptly and unscrupulously made use of the ammunition placed in their hands. He admits the water was spilled and could not be gathered up again. Still, if he took her back without a word, his enemies would point to it as an admission of the truth of her charges. The least she could do would be to unsay what she had said: "For instance, you have said over and over that I have lived in adultery these twenty years. Do you believe this or do you not? If you do, how can you think of living with such a monster? If you do not, give it me under your hand. Is not this the least that you can do?"

The negotiations came to nothing. Wesley was at this time seventy-four years old. On October 12, 1781, four years later, he writes in his *Journal*: "I came to London and was informed that my wife died

on Monday. This evening she was buried, though I was not informed of it till a day or two after."

Thus at the age of seventy-eight Wesley was free again.

The work in which Wesley was engaged, that of stirring up religious emotion in great crowds of people, mostly women, neutralized to a large extent his need of loving one woman. The reaction upon him of those he exhorted took the place in part of the affection of an individual. This helps to explain his inability to act at the critical moment when he could have married Grace Murray, his numerous but ineffectual love affairs and his blind plunge into matrimony with the wrong woman.

HYMNS

THOUSANDS who cared nothing for preaching were drawn to Wesley's meetings by the singing. To one who left the Church of England for doctrine ten were drawn away by a song. The effect of the singing upon a simple soul is well described by Mrs. Bennet:

"As I approached the place where the people were singing, the very sound set all my passions afloat, though I did not know one word they uttered, which plainly shows how the affections may be greatly moved while the understanding is quite dark."

Congregational singing had almost died out before Wesley's day. The usual practice in the churches was to chant the Psalms in a metrical version by Sternhold and Hopkins. Even this slight effort was too much for most congregations, and it was left altogether to the parish clerk, who, as a rule, tore verses limb from limb. "Human hymns" were regarded with distrust. It was very well to chant the Psalms of David, but paraphrases, even those of Dr. Watts, were looked upon with suspicion.

One of the indictments against Wesley in Georgia was that he introduced new hymns in the service and

made unauthorized changes in the metrical psalms. He had no intention of altering the church ritual. His meetings were not, in his opinion, substitutes for church services but supplemental to them. In England, Wesley made hymn singing popular; and in Ireland he heard Catholic children whistling Methodist tunes along the road.

Singing was a favorite exercise of Wesley's. The Oxford Holy Club sang the hymns of Watts and those in the New Version by Tate and Brady. In Georgia, Wesley sang and he walked in his garden or in the woods. A page of his Georgia diary tells the story. The numbers on the margin refer to hours of the day; the fractions to parts of an hour. The day is March 22, 1737.

8. Walked, verse, sung
9. Made verse, sung
11. Verse. Writ them
12. Writ them, drest, $\frac{3}{4}$ visited
 1. Visited
 2. Visited, $\frac{3}{4}$ transcribed.
 3. Tea, conversed
- 40 Logic
4. Transcribed, $\frac{3}{4}$ walked, sung
5. Walked, sung, private prayer, Greek Testament

He was at this time making verses of his own, translating German hymns and fitting English hymns to German tunes. He tried out his composi-

tions on his friends and congregations. His first hymn book was published at Charleston, two years before his brother Charles, who later became the songmaker of Methodism, wrote his first hymn.

John Wesley kept up his habit of singing in England.

The following page records a walk from London to Oxford, shortly after his return from America:

- 6.15 Drest, prayer;
- 7. Mrs. Claggett's, tea, singing, conversed;
- 8. Mr. Jennings, tea, singing, conversed;
- 9:30 walked with Mr. Bray, Jennings and Shaw, conversed, singing, prayer
- 11.30 they [Bray and Jennings] went, conversed with Mr. Shaw, singing;
- 2. Uxbridge, dinner;
- 3. walked, conversed, singing;
- 7. Wickham, Mr. Hollis, in talk;
- 7.30 Mr. Crouch's;
- 8. tea, conversed, prayer, conversed.

Through the Moravians, Wesley became acquainted with the hymns of the Lutherans. The blight which had fallen upon congregational singing in England had not touched Germany. Luther's hymns had done more for the Reformation than his translation of the Bible. He had taken church music and given it to the common people by setting hymns in the colloquial language to the tunes of the German chorales. Hymn

singing became universal throughout the German Reformed Church. Hymn-writers flourished as in no other country. Children learned Luther's hymns; martyrs sang them. "Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott" became a popular song.

The hymn book that Wesley published at Charleston in 1737 contained five translations from the German, thirty-five hymns by Watts, seven by John Austin, six by George Herbert, two by Addison, five by Samuel Wesley the elder and five by John Wesley's brother Samuel. John's work was only that of translation.

In subsequent publications issued over the names of John and Charles the individual contributions of the brothers were not indicated. As John ultimately left all hymn-writing to Charles and the endless stream of verse that flowed from the younger brother's pen outran computation it became customary to assume that John wrote nothing but translations. It is now admitted that John's contributions to the joint publications were considerably more than was formerly assumed. They had been buried, however, under the enormous output of Charles, which continued uninterrupted from the day of his conversion to the day of his death. His compositions have been estimated at more than six thousand five hundred, most of them, to be sure, puerile and unimportant. It was John's task to criticise, edit and publish this metrical flow.

The hymns were originally published in small,

To all y^e Earth make known,
Whom Thy Heart doth desire, my God & King,
What thou to me hast given.
That thou y^e Everlasting Source
of mercy art known
From whom is unceasing course,
Unnumbered blessings flow.
What are we, Lord? of all we have
What hath our eye deserved,
But as thy Bounty, Father, gave,
Didst thou Hard bath made,
Thee hath thy creatures, every day
Said by his pow'rsome voice?
Who w^t soft, dear & kindly pack
Beds, our glad fields, regions
When abounding Earth's face before
Thee didst give; Example too before
The world, in us set our example, then
Most glad, our hearts to thine
A nation where both gifts are few,
All dispossessing stand,
And bid us go hence to gather all
We need from out our land.

cheap booklets, but as the material accumulated it became inconvenient to carry an assortment of volumes to meeting. Larger compilations were issued, including, besides the hymns of the Wesleys, many by other writers.

In the year in which John Wesley began his outdoor preaching (1739) he published a hymn book which went through three editions. It contained, besides twenty-two translations from the German, the first of Charles Wesley's hymns: "Where shall my wondering soul begin." Charles wrote this hymn immediately after his conversion, but fearing that his motive in writing it was pride he had put it aside until an illiterate mechanic named Bray with whom he discussed the matter persuaded him to finish it.

John and Charles published in all fifty-six hymn books, besides several tune books. A large number of Charles Wesley's hymns are simply rhymed tracts. Many are controversial, aimed at the Calvinistic Methodists. There appeared, for instance, a collection of eighteen hymns dealing with "God's everlasting love," which assailed the "hellish" and "Satanic" doctrines of the Whitefield wing of Methodism. About thirty such hymn tracts were published in the course of fifty years. They were bought by the thousands and eagerly sung at home and society meetings.

The Methodists were taught in musical phrases what to think on every current topic—on eternity,

the earthquakes, the rumored invasion from France, the defeat of Prince Charles Edward Stuart at Culloden, the Gordon riots. Conversion, marriage, death were sung by Charles Wesley. There were hymns for every church holiday—"Graces Before Meat," "Hymns for Children," "Preparation for Death," "Hymns for the Poor" and "Hymns for Those That Seek and Those That Have Redemption in the Blood of Jesus Christ."

Charles Wesley's hymns have an admirable directness of statement. The rhythmic beat is clear and strong. There is an economy of words rare in poets, religious or otherwise. Every word bears its full burden of meaning, and they are plain words suitable to his subject. The thought is necessarily narrow. Usually the whole sense of the poem is given in the first stanza, the subsequent stanzas only repeating, with changed Biblical figures, the same idea. It is no doubt essential to the hymn that the full force of emotion be felt at the beginning. A hymn is not a ballad but a shout of exultation, or a resigned sigh. Cumulative effects are impossible. Charles Wesley's only rival in England was Dr. Watts, but Watts falls behind in quantity and in vigor. Watts himself remarked that he would rather have written "Wrestling Jacob" than all his own hymns.

John Wesley proudly summed up in a preface the qualities of Charles' hymns: "In these hymns there is no doggerel, no botches, nothing put in to

patch up the rhyme, no feeble expletives. Here is nothing turgid or bombastic, on the one hand, or low and creeping, on the other. Here are no cant expressions, no words without meaning. Here are (allow me to say) both the purity, the strength, and the elegance of the English language; and at the same time the utmost simplicity and plainness suited to every capacity."

This is a forcible statement of what John Wesley prized in a hymn, though it somewhat overshoots the mark as a description of Charles Wesley's work. A few of the hymns, however, fully merit all John's praise. "Wrestling Jacob" paints with a few strokes a gloomy picture of the mystic wrestling bout in the dark:

Come, O thou traveller unknown,
Whom still I hold, but cannot see!
My company before is gone,
And I am left alone with thee:
With thee all night I mean to stay,
And wrestle till the break of day.

The remaining stanzas tersely state the doctrinal significance of the wrestling bout.

Words, one should not forget, constitute hardly the half of a hymn. They give the cue to the sentiment; the tune is its soul. In Charles Wesley's hymns we frequently find real poetic competence added to the cruder essentials of a good hymn. Best known of

all, known perhaps as well outside the church as in it, is “Jesus, lover of my soul.”

Powerful etching, booming rhythm, characterize Charles’ best hymns. Here is a stanza from “David and Goliath.”

Who is this gigantic foe
 That proudly stalks along:
 Overlooks the crowd below
 In brazen armour strong?
 Loudly of his strength he boasts:
 On his sword and spear relies:
 Meets the God of Israel’s hosts,
 And all their force defies.

Excellent as this is in its way, the Wesleyan masterpieces are those that chant a mood of praise, or gratitude, or trust. A few are known to all church-goers.

O for a thousand tongues to sing
 My great Redeemer’s praise!
 The glories of my God and King,
 The triumphs of His grace!

and

Love divine, all loves excelling,
 Joy of heaven to earth come down:
 Fix in us Thy humble dwelling,
 All Thy faithful mercies crown.

The main thing in a good revival hymn is rhythm, strong and sharply accented. “Languorous love

music," as Professor Coe calls it, and "personal reference songs (I—me—my songs)" contribute also to the hypnotic effect. These qualities in the Methodist hymns account for their great success.

John Wesley's compositions and translations are more sober and restrained than his brother's. They reveal, on the other hand, greater progression of thought. "The Pilgrim" cannot have such universality of appeal as the emotional outbursts of Charles, but the first, fourth and seventh stanzas have a peculiar autobiographical reference:

1. How happy is the Pilgrim's Lot
How free from every anxious thought,
From worldly hope and fear!
Confined to neither court nor cell,
His soul despains on earth to dwell
He only sojourns here.

4. I have no sharer of my heart
To rob my Saviour of a part,
And desecrate the whole.
Only betrothed to Christ am I,
And wait His coming from the sky,
To wed my happy soul.

7. Nothing on earth I call my own
A stranger to the world unknown
I all their goods despise.

I trample on their whole delight,
And seek a country out of sight,
A country in the skies.

The "Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People called Methodists," which Wesley published in 1780, was sold by the millions and remained the standard Methodist hymn book until revised one hundred and twenty years after publication. One hundred and twenty Wesley hymns still survive in the latest edition of the Methodist hymnal.

John Wesley selected the tunes for the hymns and taught the Methodists how to sing. He had a clear understanding of the important part singing played in the Methodist revival. Slight variations in procedure, which meant nothing to others, were vital to him. He threatened to dismiss those preachers who sang more than two hymns at a service. In a letter to a pair who broke the rule he wrote: "If you do not chuse to obey me, you need not: I will let you go when you please and send other preachers in your place. If you do chuse to stay with me, never sing more than twice; once before and once after Sermon." He did not wish the people to tire of the singing.

When he was eighty-seven, being at a service in York, a few discordant notes grated on his ear. He broke in at the end of the first verse saying: "Now listen to brother Masterman" (the leading singer).

The singing became no better. He stopped it again. "Listen to me," he bade them and tried to give them the tune correctly in his cracked old voice, which proved unequal to the strain.

The hymns were read out at Methodist meetings two lines at a time, so that even those who could not read themselves might join in. No instrumental accompaniment was allowed. The performances were enlivened, however, by musical dialogue—one section of the congregation singing a question and another section the answer. The Methodists sang lustily, and only a very cold sinner could hear a great concourse of plain men and women rolling out "Blow ye the trumpet, blow" or "O for a thousand tongues to sing" or "Soldiers of Christ arise" without being swept off his feet.

Wesley's pride in the singing of his Methodists found expression in the preface to his last collection of hymns (1780): "Their solemn addresses to God are not interrupted by the formal drawl of a parish clerk, the screaming of boys who bawl out what they neither feel nor understand, or the unreasonable and unmeaning impertinence of a voluntary on the organ. When it is seasonable to sing praise to God, they do it with the spirit and understanding also; not in the miserable, scandalous doggerel of Sternhold and Hopkins; but in psalms and hymns which are both sense and poetry, such as would sooner provoke a critic to turn Christian than a Christian to turn critic.

What they sing is, therefore, a proper continuation of the spiritual and reasonable service; being selected for that end not by a humdrum wretch, who can scarcely read what he drones out with such an air of importance, but by one who knows what he is about; not by a handful of wild unawakened stripplings but by a whole serious congregation; and those not lolling at ease, or in the indecent posture of sitting, drawling out one word after another, but all standing before God, and praising him lustily, and with a good courage."

Lustiness sometimes became mere noise. When that happened, Wesley told his preachers, the singers were to be stopped and the preachers were to ask: "Now, do you know what you said last? Did it suit your case? Did you sing it as to God with the spirit and understanding also?" He selected all the music sung by the early Methodists, insisting that everybody should be taught to sing correctly by note. Later he prided himself upon the good taste he had displayed, although not a technically trained musician. He discovered that the tunes he had chosen were in the classical style of "the ancients," which consisted wholly of melody or the arrangement of single notes. The fashionable fugue style was one of his pet aversions.

Florid music in a church always stirred him to wrath. He was invited to preach in the parish church at Neath, in Wales, which had recently lost its min-

ister. The singing annoyed him and he wrote in his *Journal*:

1. Twelve or fourteen persons kept it to themselves and quite shut out the congregation.
2. These repeated the same words, contrary to all sense and reason, six or eight or ten times over.
3. According to the shocking custom of modern music, different persons sang different words at one and the same moment ; an intolerable insult on common sense, and utterly incompatible with any devotion.

Again, at Warrington, he arrived “just in time to put a stop to a bad custom, which was creeping in here; a few men who had fine voices sang a psalm which no one knew in a tune fit for an opera, wherein three, four or five persons sung different words at the same time! What an insult on common sense! What a burlesque upon public worship. No custom can excuse such a mixture of profaneness and absurdity.”

Wesley was master of the singing as of everything else connected with the Methodist movement. When he published his “Sacred Melody” he wrote: “I have been endeavouring for more than twenty years to procure such a book as this. But in vain; Masters of Music were above following any direction but their own. And I was determined whoever compiled this should follow my direction, not mending our tunes but setting them down, neither better nor worse than they were. At length I have prevailed.”

Handel composed music expressly for the Methodists: "Sinners obey the Gospel word," "O love divine, how sweet thou art" and "Rejoice! the Lord is King." Some of the Methodist tunes were popular melodies of the day. Charles Wesley once heard some sailors singing a music-hall ditty called "Nancy Dawson." He wrote words to the tune and brought them around for the sailors to sing. During the great earthquake he took a popular song, "He comes, he comes, the hero comes," and wrote to the same tune his hymn "He comes, he comes, the judge severe."

Wesley published, in 1742, "A Collection of Tunes Set to Music as They are Commonly Sung at the Foundery," and in 1761 a better book, entitled "Sacred Melody." These tunes, he wrote, were put down "exactly as I desire all our congregation to sing them. The volume likewise is small, as well as the price. This therefore I recommend preferably to all others." He objected to the singing of any other tunes.

In his directions for singing Wesley's autocratic temper had full sway. He formulated seven rules:

1. Learn these tunes before any others.
2. Sing them exactly as printed.
3. Sing all of them.
4. Sing lustily.
5. Sing modestly.
6. Sing in tune.

7. Above all, sing spiritually with an eye to God in every word.

He wished the hymns to be sung in a high key "in order to reach the full vigor of expression."

The preachers were instructed to set the example by studying music and preaching frequently on singing. They were to exhort every one to sing and were to "recommend our Tune Book everywhere." They were to suit the tune to the words and not let the people sing too slow. The women were to sing their parts alone—"let no man sing with them unless he understands the notes and sings the bass."

Wesley made song a powerful influence in the revival because he himself was deeply moved by song. When he was eighty-four he visited Bolton and recorded his delight at the singing. There was not in any of the Methodist Churches in the three kingdoms, he proclaimed, such a set of singers: "There cannot be, for we have near a hundred such trebles—boys and girls selected out of our Sunday schools, and accurately taught—as are not to be found together in any chapel, cathedral or music room within the four seas. Besides, the spirit with which they all sing, and the beauty of many of them, so suits the melody, that I defy any to exceed it; except the singing of angels in our Father's house."

CONTROVERSY

AT the outset of his career Wesley appears truculent and spoiling for a fight, especially with his former teachers. He quarrels first with his old mentor William Law and then with the Moravians. Ten days before his conversion he wrote Law an astonishing letter announcing the new truth that was dawning upon his mind. He then proceeds in this amazing style: "Now, sir, suffer to ask how you will answer it to our common Lord, that you never gave me this advice? Did you never read the Acts of the Apostles, or the answer of Paul to him who said, 'What must I do to be saved?' Or are you wiser than he? Why did I scarce ever hear you name the name of Christ?"

Why had not Law, in short, taught him salvation by faith?

"I beseech you, sir, by the mercies of God, to consider deeply and impartially whether the true reason of your never pressing this upon me was not this—that you had it not yourself?"

He concludes: "Once more, sir, let me beg you to consider whether your extreme roughness, and morose and sour behaviour, at least on many occasions,

can possibly be the fruit of a living faith in Christ?"

There was no other motive for this insolent letter than the need which Wesley felt for getting the saintly Law out of his system. It was from him that Wesley had caught his early attack of holiness. Law was a man of great literary powers, and his reply far surpasses Wesley's letter in logical acuteness, weight and dignity: "Who made me your teacher?" he demanded. "Or can make me answerable for any defects in your knowledge?" Why did not Wesley blame the bishops who ordained him and sent him to Georgia for not telling him the Divine secret with which he was bursting? "Pray, sir, be at peace with me," concluded Law; or in brief—"Let me alone!"

Wesley's letters to Law show clearly the excited state of his mind. He had the blindness of the new convert who sees only what the flash of lightning has revealed to him. Law's influence upon him as upon many other religious minds of the time had been profound. But Wesley was done with Law's ideal of a pure, contemplative, self-centered existence, spent mainly in thinking of God.

Wesley's next tussle was with the Moravians of the Fetter Lane society. He himself had been one of the founders of this society. It consisted of Englishmen who had accepted the Moravian doctrines, especially that of salvation by faith.

During the time that Wesley was at Bristol, in 1739, whither he had gone on Whitefield's invitation,

Charles, assisted by a young man named Philip Henry Molther, led the Fetter Lane society. Molther had studied theology at Jena and had been tutor to Count Zinzendorf's son. He became very popular at Fetter Lane, though his sermons at first had to be repeated by an interpreter.

According to James Hutton, the bookseller in whose shop the society met, Wesley was jealous. Hutton wrote a long letter to Count Zinzendorf about the fiery little Englishman:

“John Wesley being resolved to do all things himself, and having told many souls that they were justified, who have since discovered themselves to be otherwise, and having mixed the words of the law with the Gospels as means of grace, is at enmity against the Brethren. Envy is not extinct in him. His heroes falling every day almost into poor sinners, frighten him; but at London the spirit of the Brethren prevails against him. In a conference lately, where he was speaking that souls ought to go to church as often as they could, I besought him to be easy and not disturb himself; and I would go to church as often as he would meet me there; but he would not insist upon it.”

Wesley was picking quarrels with the brethren. Hutton feared he would soon become “an open enemy of Christ and his church.” He goes on: “Both John and Charles Wesley are dangerous to many young women. Several are in love with him. I wish

they were married to some good sisters; though I would not give them one of mine, even if I had many."

It is clear that the controversy was by no means one of pure ideas. Molther, the leader of the quietists, was about thirty years old. Wesley at this time was thirty-seven. Whatever may have been his fascination for the ladies, his stand seems to have been sound and statesmanlike in the controversy with Molther. The brethren of Fetter Lane were taking the doctrine of "stillness" with fierce delight. One after another those who had experienced salvation left off public prayer, going to Communion, reading the Bible, listening to sermons and all the "ordinances of God" and "the means of grace." The argument of the brethren was neat and conclusive. The ordinances, they said, were designed only for believers. Therefore if a man used them before he believed he was a hypocrite. After he believed and was saved it made no difference whether he used "the means of grace" or not—whether he went to church, prayed, read the Bible, or did anything at all. Since he was saved there was nothing more to be done. The brethren and sisters of Fetter Lane under the leadership of the fascinating young German wished, in short, to throw the whole ecclesiastical works overboard. They had religion in the heart. That was enough!

That sort of reasoning gave Wesley a headache. He admitted that prayer, reading the Bible, listen-

ing to sermons and receiving the Lord's Supper should not be used as substitutes for inner religion; but they were necessary to keep social religion a-going. He did not believe the brethren could stand the strong wine of individual independence. Events proved he was correct in his opinion.

The brethren at Fetter Lane were quite bewildered. Richard Bell, a watchcase maker, had convinced himself that he and Molther and one other were the only true Christians in England. Another member evolved the thought that "you may as well go to hell for praying as for thieving." One John Browne announced: "If we read the devil reads with us; if we pray he prays with us; if we go to church or sacrament he goes with us." The conclusion he drew from these premises was "do nothing."

The antinomian confusion was neatly brought out in a conversation between John Wesley and one of the radicals:

"Do you believe you have nothing to do with the law of God?" asked Wesley.

"I have not: I am not under the law; I live by faith."

"Have you, as living by faith, a right to everything in the world?"

"I have; all is mine, since Christ is mine."

"May you, then, take anything you will anywhere? Suppose, out of a shop, without the consent or knowledge of the owner?"

"I may, if I want it, for it is mine. Only I will not give offense."

"Have you also a right to all the women in the world?"

"Yes, if they consent."

"And is that not sin?"

"Yes, to him that thinks it is a sin, but not to those whose hearts are free."

"Surely, these are the firstborn of Satan!" comments Wesley.

The brethren were the first to weary of argument. By a vote of the members Wesley was forbidden to preach in the Fetter Lane meeting-room. He remained a member however, and as a member he attended the society's love-feast four days after his exclusion from the pulpit and read a paper denouncing the base doctrine of the German and inviting all who agreed with him to follow him out. Eighteen or nineteen answered his call. He had already started another society composed of devoted personal followers. Together with the seceders from Fetter Lane, twenty-five men and fifty women met three days later at the Foundery.

Wesley did nothing by halves. He followed up his secession by sending a letter to the Moravian Church at Herrnhut in which he dutifully pointed out each and every fault that he had observed in the members of that church, particularly the fault of exalting themselves and despising others; that of thinking

themselves and their church infallible; of guarding themselves too much against "animal joy"; against the natural love of one another, and against "selfish love of God." He concludes benignly, having got this off his chest, "unburdened his soul," that if his frankness should do his friends the Moravians any good they ought to give the credit to God and not to the wisdom of man. Wesley never shirked a Divine mandate to rebuke error!

Quietism grew naturally out of the doctrine of salvation by faith, and led easily to what Wesley called "antinomianism," or religious anarchy.

It was inevitable that some minds should take that step. The scandals caused by antinomian Methodists furnished Wesley's enemies with welcome ammunition. Hall, his own brother-in-law, became as shining an example of an antinomian style of life as could be found in that antinomian period. The royal court led the pace, but Methodist antinomians were as fast as any.

The fascination of stillness is amusingly illustrated in the behavior of Charles Wesley. During the first onset of stillness at Fetter Lane while he was in charge with Molther he manfully resisted, standing up for the "ordinances of God" in spite of "heady, violent, fierce contenders for stillness." He resorted to the strange device of reading his own *Journal* to the bands "as an antidote to stillness." When the rowdy brethren interrupted him he re-

buked them sharply and ordered them to be quiet. He had a curious love for "rebuking sharply." The enraged brethren told him John was with them in pulling down the ordinances, and here he was trying to build them up again. They shut the door of the meeting-house in his face.

The next year Charles himself began to disintegrate. He was in charge of the Foundery while John was at Bristol. In the midst of a sermon he suddenly stopped. He had come to the conclusion, he announced, that the quietists were right. He ought not to preach, or do any of the ordinances, while his spiritual condition was as uncertain as he felt it to be. The society was amazed "as when a standard bearer fainteth." John was summoned home. Charles was given a rest at Oxford. Ultimately John convinced him that he was mistaken and he returned to his preaching.

The genuineness of John Wesley is seen in the way he cuts through the technical puzzles of the theologians. The question whether a man is saved by works or by faith had occupied professional theologians for many generations. True, says Wesley, we are saved by faith. But those who are "justified" must inevitably show their state of mind in their acts. Acts issue from an inner state. To suppose that a man can be all holiness within and do nothing to show it is nonsense. Ideas discharge into acts. You cannot divide acts from ideas. The inner state be-

comes inevitably visible in "works." What is the difference, then, whether you say we deserve credit for our acts or for our inner state? And what is the difference whether you say rewards are *because* of works or only *measured* by works? The attempts of a few to separate the inner state from behavior ended in disaster. They had to learn over again that social taboos insist upon certain distinctions such as that between one's own and another's wife.

Curiously enough, the position taken by religious purists and ascetics of antiquity and that of the newest school of psychology as to the relation between the inner state and outward behavior are identical. The view that a thought is an act was responsible for untold spiritual torture. Jesus expressed it when he said: "But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery." The St. Anthonys refined the idea: He who thought of a woman, even though she was not visible to the naked eye, had committed adultery. The behaviorist school of psychologists agrees with this. They put it even more uncompromisingly: There are no "thoughts"! Thoughts are acts!

Wesley, too, believed that thoughts were acts. His practical sense, however, saved him from foolishness. His early diaries show that he had floundered about in the jungle of theoretical holiness. He has a queer sermon entitled "Wandering Thoughts" in which he strives manfully to separate thoughts for which a

man may be held responsible and others that come and go he knows not whence or how.

Wesley's bitterest opponents were the Anglican churchmen. When they attacked him he struck back as became a Christian—deprecatingly, but with stinging right and left jabs. Of this art he was a great master.

Before 1762 there were published three hundred and thirty-two anti-Methodist books and pamphlets, most of them by Anglican clergymen. Wesley had broken their rest. It was not decent to be enthusiastic as he was. Enthusiasm had been tried and the country had had more than enough of it under the Puritan régime. What did Wesley mean by acting as if God were still alive? It was blasphemy! God had started the ball a-rolling, had said His say, issued His decrees, and was through: the age of miracles was past.

Edmund Gibson, the Bishop of London, accused the Methodists of robbing the regular clergy of their flocks. The Methodists were the church's worst enemies. How had he deprived the clergy of their job, demanded Wesley, since they had not been attending to it? In refutation of the charge that his teaching had had a pernicious influence upon the people, he points to the results:

“In answer to all this I appeal to plain fact: The habitual drunkard, that was, is now temperate in all things. The whoremonger now flees fornication. He that stole steals no more, but works with his hands.

He that cursed and swore, perhaps at every sentence, has now learned to serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice unto Him with reverence. Those formerly enslaved to vicious habits of sin are now brought to uniform habits of holiness. These are demonstrable facts. I can name the men with their places of abode."

Bishop George Lavington of Bristol went after Wesley in the three-part pamphlet "The Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists Compared." Lavington was vulgar and scurrilous. He tried to show that the fanaticism and superstition of Wesley and his followers were worse than anything recorded of the Catholics. The pamphlet was published anonymously, but the Bishop of Exeter was known to be the author.

Wesley sailed into the anonymous writer [Lavington] with all he had. He showed that his reverence had distorted facts and used bad logic and bad grammar. "Any scribbler not encumbered with good nature or modesty could with a little wit raise a laugh among his own kind and run down people whom he dared not face," wrote Wesley. "But it is high time, sir, you should leave your skulking place. Come out and let us look each other in the face. I have little leisure and less inclination for controversy. Yet I promise, if you will set your name to your third part [of the pamphlet, which was going out in installments], I will answer all that shall concern me."

The bishop preferred to remain anonymous, but eased his conscience by calling Wesley's letter "a

medley of chicanery, sophistry, prevarication, evasion, pertness, conceitedness, scurrility, sauciness and effrontery." The Methodists, he proved, were "boastful, hypocritical, crafty and fantastical." To this Wesley rejoined, after painstaking refutation of every charge, that not one was true, and that the bishop didn't believe in his own accusations.

Bishop Warburton of Gloucester some ten years later took a shot at Wesley. He had a lot of fun with Wesley's stories of queer happenings, as reported in the *Journal*. God wasn't doing miracles in those days, wrote Bishop Warburton. He had stopped about seventeen hundred and fifty years ago. Wesley's belief in them showed a feeble intelligence and a disordered imagination. The bishop had Wesley at a disadvantage on this theme, as even Wesley's best friends were embarrassed by his stories of spooks, omens, witchcraft and miraculous rescues. Wesley replied that his stories had nothing to do with his religious principles. Nobody was asked to believe the stories. He gave them for what they were worth.

The bishop stupidly charged that Wesley was making money from the contributions of the Methodists. Wesley showed how he had gone into debt personally for the building of meeting-houses in London and Bristol. The Methodist collections did not pass through his hands but were in the charge of stewards.

"Why should any man," he asks, "who has all the

conveniences and many of the superfluities of life, deliberately throw up his ease, most of his friends, his reputation, the way of life of all others most agreeable both to his natural temper and education, toil day and night, spend all his time and strength—to gain a debt of six or seven hundred pounds?"

Wesley's debate with the Anglicans ended in complete victory for him before he died. Not only was every pulpit thrown open to him but the Anglican Church paid him the sincere compliment of imitation by inaugurating an evangelical revival of its own.

The Calvinistic controversy was the most serious of all to the Methodist movement. It split off the Calvinistic from the Wesleyan Methodists. The rage of the Calvinists is hard to understand. Why should a man grow enthusiastic for the doctrine that men are chosen from eternity for salvation or perdition? Yet many did grow excited over this proposition. Wesley was willing to let the subject alone, although he was opposed to the doctrine. He had one great practical object in view—to found a society for moral ends. Disputes upon theological dogmas were sure to divide the society, and he tried his best to shut off argumentation. "The Methodists do not impose, in order to the admission of persons to their societies any opinions whatsoever," he wrote. "They may be Churchmen or Dissenters, Presbyterians or Independents. One condition only is required—a real de-

sire to save their soul. Where this is, it is enough; they desire no more; they lay stress upon nothing else; they ask only: ‘Is thy heart herein as my heart? If it be, give thy hand.’” He goes on with just pride: “Is there any other society in Great Britain or Ireland that is so remote from bigotry? That is so truly of a catholic spirit? So ready to admit all serious persons without distinction? Where, then, is there such another society in Europe? In the habitable world? I know none. Let any man show it me that can.”

The Calvinists attacked Wesley for the very reason that he refused to argue with them. One of these hot-heads had been excluded by Charles from the Foundry while John was away. Upon John’s return, the man complained to him:

“Do you refuse admitting a person into your society only because he differs from you in opinion?”

“No; but what opinion do you mean?”

“That of election. I hold a certain number are elected from eternity, and these must and shall be saved, and the rest of mankind must and shall be damned. And many of your society hold the same.”

“I never asked whether they hold it or not. Only let them not trouble others by disputing about it,” replied Wesley.

“Nay, but I will dispute about it.”

"What, wherever you come?"

"Yes, wherever I come!"

"Why, then, would you come among us, who you know are of another mind?"

"Because you are all wrong, and I am resolved to set you all right."

"Then I fear your coming with this view would neither profit you nor us."

"Then I will go and tell all the world that you and your brother are false prophets. And I tell you, in one fortnight you will all be in confusion."

The most prominent figure in the Calvinistic onslaught upon Wesleyanism, though intellectually one of the weakest, was George Whitefield. If judged by the effect of his preaching upon critics like Benjamin Franklin and Horace Walpole, Whitefield was a very great orator. Franklin who scoffed at his theology, went to hear him as he would a consummate actor—for the tones of his voice. Finding the churches closed to him upon his return from his first voyage to America because of his association with Wesley, Whitefield had hit upon the idea of preaching outdoors. He wanted money for the orphanage he had founded in Savannah. He selected Kingswood Common, four miles from Bristol, and his first audience consisted of about a hundred miners. Three weeks later he was addressing audiences of ten thousand. The Kingswood colliers—noted as holy terrors, "ignorant, lewd, profane, and brutal"—listened to

him open-mouthed. He could see the white gutters traced upon their sooty cheeks as the tears rolled down. That was the beginning of Methodist field preaching.

The news of Whitefield's amazing performances soon reached the great world outside the mining district. The aristocracy began coming in its carriages, listening as if at an opera. Selina, Countess of Huntingdon, captured Whitefield for herself, appointed him her domestic chaplain and invited her distinguished friends to come and hear him: Pitt, Lord North, Bolingbroke, the Prince of Wales, George Selwyn, Lord Chesterfield, Lord Lyttelton and many others. Methodism was in danger of becoming fashionable. "If you think of coming to England you must prepare yourself with Methodism," wrote Horace Walpole to Horace Mann; "I really think by that time it will be necessary."

In America Whitefield had met Jonathan Edwards and had been present at the Northampton revival, the "great awakening," stirred up by Edwards. He returned to England burning with predestination, election and reprobation.

As a theologian and logician Whitefield was scarcely adult, but he was so dizzied by his success and the new dogmas he had brought from America that he grew almost apoplectic when he met with argument instead of adoration. He assumed pontifical airs toward Wesley in public. In private letters he

entreathed his revered brother not to allow controversy to mar their beautiful friendship.

“Dear Brother Wesley”: he wrote, “For Christ’s sake avoid all disputation! Do not oblige me to preach against you; I had rather die.” . . . “What mean you by disputing in your letters? May God give you to know yourself, and then you will not plead for absolute perfection, or call the doctrine of election a doctrine of devils. My dear brother, take heed!—remember you are but a babe in Christ, if so much! Be humble, talk little, think and pray much!— If you must dispute, stay till you are master of the subject; otherwise you will hurt the cause you would defend.” In another letter we read: “Oh, that God may give you a sight of free, sovereign and electing love! But no more of this. Why will you compel me to write thus? Why will you dispute? I am willing to go with you to prison and to death; but I am not willing to oppose you.”

He decided soon, however, that it was his duty to speak out and wrote a letter in which among other things he reproached Wesley for casting lots to decide whether he should preach and print his famous sermon on free grace. “Dear, dear sir,” ran this letter, “O, be not offended! For Christ’s sake be not rash! Give yourself to reading! Be a little child; and then, instead of pawning your salvation as you have done in a late hymn book, if the doctrine of universal redemption be not true, instead of talking of sin-

less perfection, as you have done in the preface to that hymn book; and instead of making man's salvation to depend on his own free will, as you have in this sermon, you will compose a hymn in praise of sovereign, distinguishing love." The letter was printed without Whitefield's consent, although it had been prepared for publication, and copies were handed out at the doors of the Foundery itself. Wesley in the pulpit holding a copy in his hand, as did every other member of the congregation, explained the circumstances of its publication without Whitefield's knowledge. Then, tearing his copy in pieces, he remarked that he believed that was what Whitefield himself would do if he were present. Every one followed Wesley's example.

It was at this time that John Cennick, one of the first lay preachers, who was also acting as teacher in Wesley's school at Kingswood, became extremely zealous for the Lord and felt it his duty to oppose Wesley's teaching concerning free grace. Doing what he could secretly to undermine Wesley's prestige, he wrote a letter to Whitefield imploring him to come if he could to the aid of "the distressed lambs who were being inoculated with the plague of false doctrine."

Wesley's vigorous treatment of this cabal has been described on page 205. His action was as unquestionably just as it was effective. He hated debate for debate's sake. The Cennick type loves to discuss end-

lessly, and in the Calvinistic dogma they had a theme certain not to wear out.

Wesley's interest in this dispute was mainly practical. "I have no more right to object to a man for holding a different opinion from mine," he said at a conference, "than I have to differ with a man because he wears a wig and I wear my own hair; but if he takes his wig off and shakes the powder in my eyes I shall consider it my duty to get quit of him as soon as possible."

The point that particularly aroused his wrath in the predestinarian idea was that it made preaching useless. If a certain number are elected from eternity who must and shall be saved while the rest must and shall be damned no matter what they do, why should either the elect or the damned be exhorted to do anything about it?

The objection seems unanswerable. It did not, however, go unanswered. The church logicians had of course foreseen the difficulty. In the first place, nobody knows with certainty who are the elect. It would be exceedingly premature therefore for any man to cut up on the assumption that he had no chance anyway of going to heaven. He might be mistaken in his assumption, and then how foolish he would look at the last judgment! Those who are really destined to perdition, on the other hand, have not definite knowledge of the fact, and could not use their time on earth to better advantage (that is, more to the

glory of God)' than by behaving like good citizens.

The mystery of the Calvinist's enthusiasm for the dogma of election is further explained by his instinct of humility. He revelled in his nothingness. He prostrated himself before the Almighty. "Do good for the glory of God!" he cried. The Wesleyan's mood was not one of prostration but of hunger. His desire to get the Christ mind in himself resembled rather the cannibal warrior's ambition to incorporate the courage and prowess of a hostile chief in his own body. The Wesleyan sought definite advantages —health, freedom from fear and sin, immunity from the fires of hell, admission to the eternal bliss of heaven. The Calvinist was driven by his pride on the one hand and his humility on the other. Although the Calvinist theoretically could not be sure he was elect, picked by God for salvation before the world was made, a pious, churchgoing Presbyterian actually felt pretty secure of his future. What better evidence need one have of an elect soul than the impulse to adore the Lord and do His commandments? If you said to him: "You are doing these things only to get into heaven," he replied: "No, I am pious because it is my nature to be so." It was impossible to prove him wrong.

Here we have another explanation of the ferocity of the Calvinists against their opponents. The thought that redemption was open to everybody stirred them up just as the suggestion to nationalize

land arouses a country squire. What would become of the country squires?

It may be objected that Whitefield in spite of his determinism was as ardent a preacher as Wesley. But note the difference: When Wesley preached he left a trail of societies behind him, the members of which were pledged to a definite style of life. Whitefield was content if he reduced an audience to tears. He was essentially an actor. A sighing and weeping congregation was for him a sufficient response to a sermon.

The Countess of Huntingdon with Whitefield in her train led the Calvinistic Methodists in a separate organization. She founded a theological seminary at Trevecca, in Wales, for the training of her brand of Methodists. But after his early outbreaks in 1740 Whitefield let the disputed doctrine alone. The quarrel broke out again with genuine theological rancor after Whitefield's death in 1770.

Augustus Toplady, the author of the famous hymn "Rock of Ages," an intolerant and vindictive man, became frantic when Wesley took his translation of the predestinarian Latin author Zanchius, condensed it and reprinted it with the addition: "The sum of all is this: one in twenty (suppose) of mankind are elected, nineteen in twenty are reprobated. The elect shall be saved, do what they will; the reprobate shall be damned, do what they can. Reader, be-

lieve this or be damned. Witness my hand, A—
T—.”

Toplady complained bitterly that this was a misrepresentation of his thought, but Wesley had driven to the root of the matter. “Believe or be damned” the predestinarians were telling those who already were damned. Wesley had neither time nor inclination for the game of metaphysics. He approached the problem, as Sir Leslie Stephen reproachfully says, “not as a philosopher but as a ruler of men.”

“In almost any other case a similar forgery would transmit the criminal to Virginia or Maryland, if not to Tyburn,” wrote Toplady. Although fifty years younger than Wesley he accused the venerable evangelist of “uniting the sophistry of a Jesuit with the authority of a Pope,” of “acting the ignoble part of a lurking, sly assassin.” Wesley, in the opinion of the sweet hymnist, was “a designing wolf,” “as unprincipled as a rock and as silly as a jackdaw,” “a gray-headed enemy of all righteousness,” “a venal profligate,” “an apostate miscreant,” “a low and puny tadpole in divinity.”

In the same strain, Rowland Hill, another protégé of the Countess of Huntingdon, wrote: “I do not expect to be treated by Mr. John Wesley with the candor of a gentleman, or the meekness of a Christian, but I wish him for his reputation’s sake to write and act with the honesty of a heathen.”

When Toplady condescended to reason, he fell back upon the "clear, positive, repeated testimonies of Holy Scripture." Wesley's position with regard to the verdict of the Bible was refreshingly human. It doesn't make any difference what the Scriptures seem to say! They say many things that are dark and mysterious. One thing is certain, the Scriptures *cannot* mean that God predestines a man to sin and then sends him to eternal punishment in hell for sinning. They *cannot* mean that He mocks men by offering salvation to those who He knows are foredoomed to perdition. The Scriptures *cannot* mean that God is the father of sin and of lies, as He must be if He decreed all the evil in the world. No subtlety in the world could get the Calvinists out of their dilemma. They were driven to the argument that God does not *decree* evil but only *permits* it and foresees it, which was a complete surrender of God's attribute of omnipotence.

The predestinarian puzzle is still far from extinct. It appears very much alive where the handling of criminals is concerned. The predestinarian says put them in hospitals, for they have inherited their criminality. They must be criminals, do what they will. The practical man (who is always a believer in free will) says whip them, scare them, hang them—do anything that will make them refrain from crime.

The division between predestinarianism and free will is not purely theological. The philosophical equiv-

alent of predestinarianism is determinism, and science tends towards the Calvinistic view. When "natural law" is mentioned with bated breath one is in the presence of Calvinism. It is Calvinism when one says a man's future is fixed by his heredity. But this form of Calvinism too seems to be declining. The more nature is understood the less sure become the eternity of nature's "laws." Even the sacred law of gravity is transcended in the theory of relativity.

The decrees of the eternal cannot be altered, says the Calvinist. Why not? demands the Wesleyan. One decree may be annulled by another if God still governs His universe. You can't cheat cause and effect, says the determinist. True! But a new cause may appear at any moment as an act of human will.

But the new decree, or the act of will, had causal antecedents stretching back to eternity, implicit in God's first act of creation, argue the determinists. If a subsequent cause, an act of will or a miracle, enters into the situation, that too must have been included in God's plan. It must have been God's plan that his first decree should be nullified by his second; that the later "cause" should arrive opportunely and upset the earlier. Thus argue both the advocates of omnipotence—the Calvinists—and the supporters of a closed mechanical system of cause and effect—the philosophical determinists. In other words, when a man appears to start something in the world he is not really starting it. He is only one link in a chain

of causes. He did what he was compelled to—by his inherited temperament, by his glands, by his home life in childhood, by his education, by something he read in a newspaper, and so on.

Perhaps the problem which has baffled theologians and philosophers is one of those artificial dilemmas created by the speculative mind. To the historian “law” is obvious in all past events. It is not so clear to the politician in the turmoil of action. To the student of stock-market charts, financial waves and cycles are impressive. The big insiders, the pool operators, laugh at the chart-readers, knowing that the market has gone up because they decided yesterday to put it up. The historian is a predestinarian; the politician believes in free will. The student of price curves believes in waves and cycles; the pool operator believes in his own power. In short, seen from the outside and after the occurrence, determinism presents itself as the natural interpretation of events. Viewed from the inside, where decisions are felt, freedom is unmistakable. Now, the same man is sometimes observer, sometimes actor. When he observes he is a scientist and a Calvinist. When he acts he is a Wesleyan and a practical man. As scientist and Calvinist he adores the power which he does not understand—its beginnings are hidden from him. As an actor he feels events originating in his decisions, and believes himself free to decide.

FAITH AND HEALTH

HEALTH of body and salvation were closely connected in Wesley's mind. "Walking with Christ" meant to him acting not only as confessor to the afflicted in spirit but also as healer of the sick. He insisted that preaching at five o'clock in the morning should be kept up by his helpers wherever there were twenty hearers, and he gave these reasons: "This is the glory of the Methodists. Rising early is equally good for the soul and body. It helps the nerves better than a thousand medicines; and, in particular, preserves the sight and prevents lowness of spirits more than can well be imagined." He was surprised on coming to Chester, at the age of eighty-one, that early-morning preaching had been abandoned. The excuse that the people would not come in winter was scornfully thrust aside. Five o'clock preaching was the healthiest exercise in the world! "In the name of God," he cries, "let us, if possible, secure the present generation from drawing back to perdition! Let all the preachers that are still alive to God join together as one man, fast and pray, lift up their voice as a trumpet to convince the fallen ones and exhort

them to repent and return to first principles, particularly rising in the morning, without which neither their souls nor bodies can long remain in health."

His own faith, he believed, drove away whatever illness occasionally befell him. It gave him that abundance of energy which he lavishly spent throughout his long life. Strength comes from God, but it comes because of faith. There were "secondary means," practices and remedies with which he helped out the designs of God, but without faith these would have been futile.

He had learned the advantages of a vegetarian diet from Dr. George Cheyne's "Health and Long Life" while at Oxford. In Georgia he studied Drake's "Anatomy" so as to be able to render assistance to the colonists if more expert help should be wanting. When he started his free dispensary in 1747 he stated that he had been studying medicine for twenty-seven years. He probably referred to his habit of making notes of drugs and concoctions given him by old women. The collection of recipes entitled "Primitive Physic," which he published at a low price, was eagerly bought by the Methodists. Parts of it were published in the public journals.

Wesley wished it to be clearly understood that he was no mere nostrum peddler. Medicine and religion work together. "The love of God" he writes in "Primitive Physic," "as it is the sovereign remedy for all miseries, so, in particular, it effectually prevents

all bodily disorders the passions introduce by keeping the passions themselves within due bounds. And by the unspeakable joy and perfect calm it gives the mind it becomes the most powerful of all means of health and long life."

The passions, he believed, have a greater influence on health than most people are aware; violent or sudden passions throw people into acute diseases, and slow, lasting passions, such as grief and hopeless love, bring on chronic diseases and low fevers. If a physician were needed he advised getting one who feared God; from one who did not, however great his reputation, he would expect a curse rather than a blessing.

Carefulness in living, avoidance of mixed and highly seasoned foods, a spare diet, pure water (or "good, clear, small beer"), as much exercise in the open air as was possible without weariness, light suppers, early to bed and early rising were helpful. But over all "that old-fashioned medicine, prayer and faith in God."

A considerable number of the remedies recommended in Wesley's "Primitive Physic" were nothing but charms. That rather increased than diminished its popularity. A little roll of white paper placed under the tongue was recommended for nosebleed. To stop vomiting apply a large onion split across the grain to the pit of the stomach. He had tried it. For consumption, every morning cut a little turf of

fresh earth and, lying down, breathe into the hole for a quarter of an hour: "I have known deep consumption cured thus," he wrote "For cramp, hold a roll of brimstone in the hand. I have frequently done this with success." "For ague, make six middling pills of cobweb. Take one a little before the cold fit; two a little before the next fit (suppose the next day), the other three, if need be, a little before the third fit. This seldom fails." He was enthusiastic about electricity, which he thought came nearest a universal medicine of any yet known in the world. He had an electrical machine set up in his dispensary and fixed an hour when any one that desired might try the virtue of "this surprising medicine." In all this truly "primitive physic" Wesley was not behind the rank and file of physicians of his age, who were but little influenced by the scientific method of great physicians like Sydenham. It should be remembered how prevalent was the belief in the healing of scrofula by the king's touch. Of the one hundred and sixty drugs mentioned by Wesley, all and more were used by Sydenham. Nearly half were until recently in the United States Pharmacopæia. In many instances Wesley shows independence and good judgment. He warns against breathing near the face of the sick who have infectious fevers or swallowing saliva while in the sick room. He denied the prevalent belief that gout was incurable, saying he had cured himself many times. He says that he was bitten six times

by mad dogs and cured himself by squeezing, bathing and washing the wound for an hour with salt water—a pound to the quart—and binding salt on it for twelve hours. But he adds with emphasis: “Immediately consult an honest physician.”

When Wesley began itinerating during the winter of 1737–38 his reputation for exalted saintliness had gone before him. He was in demand as a confessor and healer and especially sought for in cases of mental derangement, which in his own view was due to demoniac possession. The religious form that most of the cases brought to him took was undoubtedly suggested by Methodist teaching. There were some who took the devil too seriously and were unable to recover their mental balance. A remarkable instance is described by Wesley himself of a middle-aged woman living half a mile from Stratford-on-Avon who had sent for the local minister and began roaring in a strange manner as soon as he came, letting her tongue hang out and distorting her face terribly. The local minister believed it was the devil in her. The woman begged that Wesley should be called if he were anywhere near. She had seen him in a dream and made her request in spite of the devil’s threats of what he would do to her if she called for the holy man. “A very odd kind of madness this!” remarked Wesley haughtily when he was told of it. As he came into her room, the woman called out: “You are Mr. Wesley! I am very well now, I thank God: nothing

ails me; only I am weak." He called the people up and they began to sing and pray; but while he was kneeling with his eyes shut a roar from the patient drowned his voice although it was as loud as if he were addressing a large audience. The woman bounced up in bed, her body rigid or convulsed, uttering the same horrid yells. But Wesley and his friends went on singing and praying until "all the symptoms ceased (for the present at least) and she was rejoicing and praising God."

Mr. K., "who had lived without God for seventy years," was easily cured by Wesley. The old sinner had no animosity against saintliness and invited Wesley to dine. "When I first came into the house," wrote Wesley, "he was in an agony of pain from an hurt of about forty-five years' standing. I advised to apply hot nettles. The pain presently ceased and he rose and praised God."

Wesley started a free dispensary, the first of its kind, and engaged an experienced surgeon and an apothecary, but resolved not to go beyond his depth and to leave all difficult and complicated cases to such physicians as the patients should choose.

He announced he would receive all those who were ill with chronic complaints. He did not care to undertake acute cases—an odd reservation! Many came every Friday. One case related by him in detail shows the kind of ills he was best able to cure. The man was a weaver named William Kirkman.

"What complaint have you?" asked Wesley.

"Oh, sir," replied William, "a cough, a very sore cough. I can get no rest day nor night."

"How long have you had it?"

"About three-score years. It began when I was eleven years old."

Wesley was "nothing glad" to have this man as one of his first cases, fearing a failure to cure him would discourage others. However, he took courage and said:

"Take this three or four times a day. If it does you no good it will do you no harm."

The weaver took the medicine (we are not told what it was) for two or three days. His cough was cured and never returned. Wesley gives due credit to God. "Which is vanity?" he asks: "to say, I by my own skill restored this man to health; or to say, God did it by His own almighty power?"

His perception of the interdependence of mental and bodily conditions was unusual for his time. A woman came to him who had been dosed by doctors for a constant pain in her stomach. The doctors did not know the cause of the trouble, but gave every likely drug a chance. "Whence came this woman's pain (which she would not have told, had she never been questioned about it)?" asks Wesley. "From fretting for the death of her son. Just what availed medicines while that fretting continued? Why then do not all physicians consider how bodily disorders are

caused or influenced by the mind, and in those cases which are utterly out of their sphere call in the assistance of a minister; as ministers, when they find the mind disordered by the body, call in the assistance of a physician?"

He was called a quack for practising without a diploma. In a letter to Archbishop Secker he defended himself spiritedly: "For more than twenty years I have had proofs that regular physicians do exceedingly little good. From a deep conviction of this I have believed it my duty, within these four months last past, to prescribe such medicines to six or seven hundred of the poor as I knew were proper for their several disorders. Within six weeks, nine in ten of them who had taken these medicines were remarkably altered for the better, and many were cured of disorders under which they had laboured for ten, twenty, forty years. Now, ought I to have let these poor wretches perish, because I was not a regular physician? To have said, I know what will cure you; but I am not of the college; you must send for Dr. Mead? Before Dr. Mead had come in his chariot, the man might have been in his coffin. And when the doctor was come, what was his fee? What! He cannot live upon nothing? So instead of an orderly cure the patient dies; and God requires his blood at my hands." The dispensary was given up, however, for lack of funds.

Wesley's physical activity was the wonder of his

times. It is hard to find a parallel in history. He seldom travelled less than four thousand five hundred miles a year, most of it, up to the age of sixty, on horseback. He often rode seventy miles in one day. Few men, if any, have spent more time in the saddle. He preached forty thousand sermons, rarely speaking for less than forty minutes. Often he preached for an hour and, not infrequently, when audiences were reluctant to depart, for two and even three hours. This was but a fraction of his labors. Besides organization and supervision of the Methodist societies he had his philanthropies and his writing and publishing to attend to. His literary work alone would have been enough to take all the time of an exceptionally energetic man.

This tirelessness and immense accomplishment was in part due to his methodical habits. "Though I am always in haste," he wrote to one of his correspondents, "I am never in a hurry, because I never undertake more work than I can go through with perfect calmness of spirit. It is true I travel four or five thousand miles a year, but I generally travel alone in my carriage, and consequently am as retired ten hours in a day as if I was in a wilderness. On other days I never spend less than three hours, frequently ten or twelve in a day alone, yet I find time to visit the sick and poor—a matter of absolute duty."

His astonishing labors have been attributed to an iron constitution. In Georgia he slept wrapped in a

cloak on the ground in all kinds of weather. Sometimes his clothes were frozen to the earth. He went about the London streets when an old man with feet wet from the thawing snow, begging for his poor Methodists, without suffering any ill effects.

If we understand by a good constitution inherited good health that explanation of Wesley's endurance does not accord with the facts. He suffered much from chronic bilious catarrh as a boy and a young man. Strict temperance and daily exercises in riding, walking, rowing and tennis were necessary to keep him in fair condition while he was at Oxford. He wrote his mother that he had been unable to stop a hemorrhage until he stripped and jumped into the river. When he was twenty-seven he began "spitting of blood" which continued until he went to America. He believed that the warm climate of Georgia cured him.

He suffered from hereditary gout, of which his mother died. His *Journal* shows his unremitting watchfulness to overcome his physical weaknesses. On September 16, 1756, his "old disorder" returned and gradually increased in spite of all medicines. The next day he concluded it was time to ask the Great Physician for help, which he did, and was well the next day. His "disorder" returned again on October 3 as violent as ever. He then thought: "Why do

I not apply to God in the beginning rather than the end of an illness." He did so and "found immediate relief."

At the age of fifty he caught a cold which was followed by a settled pain in his left breast, a violent cough and a slow fever, and when Charles Wesley arrived at his bedside he found him in imminent danger, "being far gone, and very suddenly, in a consumption." Dr. John Fothergill, the most popular of the London doctors, ordered Wesley not to stay in town a day longer, to get country air, asses' milk, rest, and to ride daily. On the evening of his arrival in the country, Wesley wrote with more than a trace of humor his own epitaph—not knowing how it might please God to dispose of him, and "to prevent vile panegyric"—as follows:

Here lieth the body
of

A Brand plucked out of the burning:

Who died of A Consumption in the Fifty-first year
of his Age

not leaving after his Debts are paid

Ten Pounds behind him:

Praying,

God be merciful to me, an unprofitable Servant.

He ordered that this, if any, inscription should be placed on his tombstone.

In his seventies and eighties he exulted over the fact that he had never lost a night of sleep in his life; although he himself has told how his habit of early rising was adopted to cure himself of insomnia. He retired regularly at half past nine and rose at four, and, like Thomas Edison, by night or day, when he called sleep, it came. His vegetarian diet and his abstention from wine were adopted because meat and wine made him ill. In Georgia, to prove to Oglethorpe that he did not refuse these customary articles of diet because of any notions of superior sanctity, he ate and drank with the other guests at the governor's table and was ill for several days thereafter.

In Georgia he continued to sleep on boards as he had begun to do on the *Simmonds*, fasted twice a week, ate no meat, and for a few months lived on bread alone. One wonders that he survived, but the outdoor life, the voyages by boat to Frederica and the adjacent islands, the camping and tramping through the woods, were precisely the sort of treatment to save a bloodspitter's life.

Wesley paid careful attention to hygienic measures of a physical nature, but also used other means to preserve his health and buoyant spirits. He prayed, he sang, he talked to himself in journals and diaries. They are crowded with pious exclamations and symbols for prayerful formulas and resolutions. He read

devotional books incessantly. He practised auto-suggestion by every known method.

The eyes of Englishmen were fixed upon Wesley's incessant movements in wondering admiration. In Georgia he read, talked, wrote, built a house, fenced and planted a garden, felled trees and helped to make roads. He learned three languages, translated and composed hymns, compiled and published the first hymn book ever used in the English Church. He travelled by foot and open boat over a large parish, tramped through pathless woods, forded rivers and lost his way in swamps. Curnock is of the opinion that John Wesley, not Charles, acted as Oglethorpe's private and confidential secretary. "Somewhere in Savannah, Charleston, Madrid, Florida or London, there should be reams of official letters in the handwriting of John Wesley."

No sooner did he land at Deal on his return from Georgia than he resumed his preaching. He preached at the inn in Deal. He preached in the villages as he journeyed toward London. Every man, woman and child that he met was a soul to be saved. He had written his brother Samuel on leaving England: "Leisure and I have parted company." That was the truth.

His circuit riding in England was carried on under such difficulties as would have appalled most other men. The roads of England in the eighteenth

century were abominable. There were no turnpikes when he began his riding. The stage coaches went no farther north than York. In many of the northern counties neither coach nor chaise had ever been seen. Sometimes he travelled over dangerous country—the fens of Lincolnshire when the water was out, and over the falls of Northumberland when they were covered with ice.

He made his schedules weeks in advance and neither snow, hail, wind, heat, cold nor private grief could deter him from fulfilling his engagements. His congregations knew that the expected horseman would appear upon the horizon punctually if it was in the power of flesh and blood to make the journey.

Vivid descriptions of some of his hardships are contained in the *Journal*.

On February 23, 1745, he was obliged to walk and lead his horse over a road like glass to prevent it from falling. "Many a rough journey have I had before," he writes, "but one like this I never had; between wind and hail, and rain and ice and snow, and driving sleet and piercing cold: but it is past: those days will return no more, and are, therefore, as though they had never been." In this sort of weather he rode two hundred and eighty miles in six days.

Again, following a day when he had been faint and weak, he writes, "I rose soon after three, lively and strong, and found all my complaints were fled away

like a dream." The weather had changed from unusual mildness to a "full-blown storm." Hail drove in his face so that he could hardly breathe. He pushed on, reached Baldock at two, was guided to Potten, and about six "preached to a serious congregation." The next day the horses could with difficulty keep their feet as they ploughed through the untracked snow in the strong wind. The snow changed to hail and rain, which drove through clothing and boots, and froze as it fell, so that he and his companion "had scarce either strength or motion left" when they came into their inn at Stilton. After a breathing-spell, off they started again, through drifts that almost swallowed man and beast. Next day his servant reported that the roads were quite filled up and impassable. "At least we can walk twenty miles a day with our horses in our hands," replies Wesley. "So in the name of God, we set out, in a north-west wind that was piercing as a sword." He had a toothache that day besides, so that when he met another traveller he could not open his mouth.

That Wesley felt the hardships of his life, that it was not all a joyous adventure, is clear from his comments. Somebody's aunt could not help telling him how sorry she was that he should leave all his friends to lead this vagabond life: "Why, indeed, it is not pleasing to flesh and blood," he explained; "and I would not do it, if I did not believe there was another world."

Again, in 1759, he remarks after preaching morning and evening at the Foundery: "How pleasing would it be to flesh and blood to remain at this little quiet place where we have at length weathered the storm! Nay, I am not to consult my own ease, but the advancing the kingdom of God."

As he enters his last decade he pauses to marvel at his own vitality and to discover the cause of it. In general, he ascribes the miracle to God, but in particular to those very exertions that aroused men's wonder.

This being my birthday, the first day of my seventy-second year, I was considering, how is this, that I find just the same strength as I did thirty years ago? That my sight is considerably better now, and my nerves firmer, than they were then? That I have none of the infirmities of old age, and have lost several I had in my youth? The grand cause is, the good pleasure of God, who doeth whatsoever pleaseth Him. The chief means are: 1. My constantly rising at four, for about fifty years. 2. My generally preaching at five in the morning, one of the most healthy exercises in the world. 3. My never travelling less by sea or land than four thousand five hundred miles in a year.

Each anniversary of his birth thereafter was greeted with a similar pæan to his good health. He never loses sight of the beneficial effect of preaching upon the body. On his seventy-third birthday he again enumerates the causes of his good health, and

adds the ability to fall asleep whenever he wished and evenness of temper: "I feel and grieve; but, by the grace of God, I fret at nothing."

At seventy-four he finds his health and strength and all the faculties of body and mind just the same as they had been at twenty-four! He continues in this strain, distributing thanks to God, to early rising, to constant exercise and frequent preaching, but sometimes ascribes all to God.

On his eightieth birthday he has become younger than he was the year before. He feels no more pain or bodily infirmity than at five and twenty— The previous year the comparison had been with nine and twenty. At eighty-one he affirms he is as strong as he was at twenty-one, and more healthy, being a stranger to headache and toothache which afflicted him in his youth.

When he has finished his eighty-second year he sings: "Is anything too hard for God? It is now eleven years since I have felt any such thing as weariness; many times I speak till my voice fails, and I can speak no longer; frequently I walk till my strength fails, and I can walk no further; yet even then I feel no sensation of weariness; but am perfectly easy from head to foot. I dare not impute this to natural causes: it is the will of God."

On his next birthday he continues: "I am a wonder to myself. It is now twelve years since I have felt any such sensation as weariness. I am never tired

(such is the goodness of God!) either with writing, preaching or travelling."

He does not admit any diminution in his faculties until he enters on his eighty-fifth year: "How little have I suffered yet," he exclaims, "by the rush of numerous years! It is true I am not as agile as I was in times past. I do not run or walk so fast as I did; my sight is a little decayed; my left eye is grown dim, and hardly serves me to read; I have daily some pain in the ball of my right eye, as also in my right temple (occasioned by a blow received some years since), and in my right shoulder and arm; which I impute partly to a sprain, and partly to rheumatism. I find likewise some decay in my memory, with regard to names and things lately past, but not at all with regard to what I have read or heard twenty, forty or sixty years ago; neither do I find any decay in my hearing, smell, taste, or appetite (though I want but a third part of the food I did once); nor do I feel any such thing as weariness in travelling or preaching; and I am not conscious of any decay in writing sermons; which I do as readily and, as I believe, as correctly as ever. To what cause can I impute this, that I am as I am? First, doubtless, to the power of God, fitting me for the work to which I am called, as long as he continues me therein; and next, subordinately to this, to the prayers of his children." He referred, of course, to the prayers of the Methodists.

PORTRAIT BY GEORGE ROMNEY

Wesley sat for the picture by Romney when he was 86 years old. In his Journal, January 5th, 1789, he writes:

"At the earnest desire of Mrs. T(ighe) I once more sat for my picture. Mr. Romney is a painter indeed! He struck off an exact likeness at once, and did more in an hour than Sir Joshua did in ten."

He wrote to Mrs. Tighe as follows:

"Dear Madam:

It could not easily be that I should refuse anything which you desired; therefore, I have sat four times to Mr. Romney, and he has finished the picture. It is thought to be a good likeness and many of my friends have desired that I would have an engraving taken from it. But I answer, 'The picture is not mine, but yours. Therefore, I can do nothing without your consent.' But if you have no objection, then I will employ an engraver that I am well assured will do it justice.

"Wishing every blessing to you and your family, I remain, dear Madam, your affectionate servant,

JOHN WESLEY."



PORTRAIT BY GEORGE ROMNEY OF JOHN WESLEY AT THE AGE OF
EIGHTY-SIX

He preached twice the day he wrote this and “endeavored to improve the hours between to the best advantage.” The next day he preached three times; at eight, at Misterton; about one, at Newby, near Haxey; about four, at his old stand in Epworth market-place.

On his eighty-sixth birthday he at length reports a sharp decline. He preached, indeed, that day, morning and evening, but he writes; “I now find I grow old: 1. My sight is decayed; so that I cannot read small print, unless in a strong light: 2. My strength is decayed; so that I walk much slower than I did some years since: 3. My memory of names, whether of persons or places, is decayed, till I stop a little to recollect them. What I should be afraid of, is, if I took thought for the morrow, that my body should weight down my mind; and create either stubbornness, or peevishness, by the increase of bodily infirmities; but Thou shalt answer for me, O Lord my God.”

On Sunday, August 23, this “decayed” old man of eighty-six preached in the amphitheater at Redruth, Cornwall, to an audience estimated at twenty-five thousand, but he doubts whether all could hear. And still he goes on from town to town. At Falworth the streets were lined by a crowd from one end of town to the other “out of stark love and kindness, gaping and staring as if the king were going by.” The churches where he preached were full. He preached

in October at Trowbridge to a multitude of people outdoors and again in the evening to his old steady congregation at Bradford. A few days later he calls a halt on himself: "I doubt I must not hereafter preach more than twice a day!"

On December 16 of that year he writes: "Being quite hoarse, I could neither sing nor speak; however, I determined to show myself, at least where I had appointed to preach. Coming to Sandwich at noon, and finding the congregation waiting, I trusted in God and began to speak; the more I spoke the more my voice was strengthened; so that in a few minutes I think all could hear; and many, I believe, took knowledge that what they heard was not the word of man but of God. I preached again at Margate in the evening and my voice was near as clear as before I began."

On New Year's Day, 1790, he admits he is "now an old man, decayed from head to foot. My eyes are dim; my right hand shakes much; my mouth is hot and dry every morning; I have a lingering fever almost every day; my motion is weak and slow."

Is he giving up at last? He concludes: "However, blessed be God, I do not slack my labor: I can preach and write still." And the next day he preached at Snowfields to the largest congregation he had seen there that year. In April of the same year he is still writing a sermon: "While I can I would fain do a little for God before I drop into the dust."

As he entered upon his eighty-eighth year, his last, he noted that "for above eighty-six years I found none of the infirmities of age; my eyes did not wax dim, neither was my natural strength abated; but last August I found almost a sudden change. My eyes were so dim that no glasses would help me. My strength likewise now quite forsook me; and probably will not return in this world. But I feel no pain from head to foot; only it seems nature is exhausted and humanly speaking will sink more and more, till the weary springs of life stand still at last."

The day after this entry in his *Journal* he crossed over to Epworth and preached, then to Lincoln, then to Newton, where the preaching-house would not contain half the congregation, and on to Misterton. The churches usually were not large enough to hold the congregations. He is still going in August. There is no pause until February 23, 1791, when Wesley preached his last sermon, a week before he died.

His death was one befitting a saint. Conscious up to the last day, he spoke words of comfort, encouragement and trust to the weeping friends who stood round his bed. Now and then they sang or prayed at his request. Every word that passed his lips was treasured up. These last moments, to his Methodist followers, offered the supreme test of his faith. What he might say while this side of eternity but gazing out through the portal of death was of the utmost significance to them.

Wesley's extraordinary labors offer most instructive evidence of a source of energy that is not in nerve or muscle. He recharged his batteries by a process of which only few have the secret. When he ran down he resorted to those measures which he knew to work. He united himself mystically with a Divine dynamo and arose healed and refreshed. Preaching itself was one of his recharging measures. The sight of happy and devout faces upturned to him for salvation and health raised him above earth. No matter how weak or depressed he was his feebleness disappeared when he faced a large congregation, led in a triumphant hymn and preached a sermon. God had fitted him for his work, he believed. When he wanted strength, he called and it came.

REVIVAL TECHNIQUE

PROSELYTIZING religions are based upon personalities—Mohammedanism upon Mohammed, Buddhism upon Buddha, Christianity upon Christ. The Mohammedan is impelled to spread the knowledge of the Koran as Mohammed did. The disciples of Buddha having been saved by Buddha's love for them are obliged, if faithful to Buddha, to love and save as he did. The Christian having the mind and heart of Christ in him must go forth and help the poor, the sick, the criminal and the savage. He is the projection of Christ. The souls he wins are won for Christ.

The founders of these religions stand in a similar personal relationship to their God—Mohammed as the prophet of Allah, Buddha as the reincarnation of Krishna, Christ as the Son of God. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" implies a model of perfect behavior in heaven upon which Jesus was patterning His life. As He identified Himself with the Father, so the apostles identified themselves with Him. They preached His truth as He preached the Father's.

Here we see the psychological root of the missionary urge.

The missionary soon learns that it is not sufficient to stand in the market-place and talk. Audiences must be collected as well as held. Wesley worked up his evangelistic technique with much psychological insight, and tried to transmit his acquired proficiency to his helpers. Like the early apostles, he aroused interest by performing miracles of healing, and like them he promised immortal life to converts. He knew that crowds were his most effective auxiliaries, and he limited his itineraries to the populous industrial centers where his talents as a crowd compeller had full scope. Like the French healer Coué, he chose always to operate in the presence of a large number of spectators. The rôle of the spectators in such performances is of great importance. A stutterer on Coué's stage, stared at by two or three thousand pairs of eyes, must have had a horror of proving a disappointment. What had he come upon the stage for if not to show how a stutterer could be cured? The huge, multiple suggestion from the other side of the foot-lights was fairly irresistible. The same was true of sinners who came into Wesley's revival meetings. What had they come for if not to be converted and to witness conversions? So they helped produce the miracles they had come to see.

Wesley, it has been noted, had two splendid devices for collecting crowds: One was outdoor preach-

ing; the other was collective singing. The strange spectacle of a minister of the Gospel in clerical garb standing on a knoll of ground under a tree or at a street corner and conducting a religious service (which nobody had ever seen done outside a church) inevitably drew a staring mob. And just as a small boy cannot help following a beaten drum, so can few adults pass by a singing mass meeting without pausing to listen.

Besides attracting listeners, mass singing unites the individuals into a psychological crowd. An orator cannot speak to twenty thousand or to one thousand persons, but only to one audience. His first task is to fuse the aggregation of individuals into a unity, and for this purpose nothing is so effective as song. Rhythm evokes a single spirit in a crowd. The individual delights in the discovery that his thought coincides with that of the mass of men around him. He exults in the amplification of his emotions. His thoughts echoed by the whole world so far as he can see appear infallible. He roars with a thousand throats.

Wesley's keen realization of the importance of collective singing was shown in the great pains he took to provide his congregations with words and music and in drilling them to sing accurately and impressively. No modern revivalist now dreams of operating without a choir and a song leader.

To whom does the revival message appeal? To the

poor, the afflicted, the slave, the captive, the unfortunate, the fearful. The greatest of the Hebrew revivalists, Isaiah, addressed a nation trembling before the oncoming shadow of resistless conquerors. The most eloquent words ever spoken promised freedom to that enslaved nation. The first Christian field preachers, of whom Saul of Tarsus was the greatest, gathered in the poor, the hopeless, the slaves, the law-breakers, the despised publicans, the fallen women. The early Christian apostles went out into the world as exorcists. Healing the mentally afflicted was their most effective means of propaganda. That was how Wesley began his work among the British laborers. His reputation as a healer at first overshadowed his fame as a preacher. His was the first religious neurological clinic. He emphasized the idea that true religion heals the body as well as the spirit. His book "Primitive Physic" gave him a reputation among his followers as a scientific healer.

Slaves of evil habits—drunkards and addicts of all kinds—constitute another large class susceptible to the influence of the revivalist. They revolve in the vicious circle of their own autosuggestion until the redeemer utters the magic word which sets them free. Powerless, however, is that word until the unfortunate have made themselves receptive by prayer.

An audience must be a prepared one, "conditioned," in order to be moved. Wesley's crowds at the mines and in the newly risen manufacturing towns

were not untutored savages, although he speaks of the colliers of Bristol and Kingswood as men who feared neither God nor regarded man, so ignorant of religion as to seem but one remove from the beasts that perish without the desire or the means of instruction. Vestiges of previous church affiliations, personal and ancestral, survived in them. Wesley did not have to tell them what "hell," "devil," or "God" meant. He had but to fan smouldering embers of belief into flame. Sometimes he failed, as at Tansfield Lea, of which he wrote: "So dead, senseless, unaffected a congregation have I scarce seen except at Wickham. Whether Gospel or law, or English or Greek, seemed all one to them." Usually his remarkable ability to arouse the dormant emotions of his hearers met with startling success.

The question whether religion appeals to fear or love is one of those unreal problems for which theologians and philosophers have a fondness. Religion appeals to both fear and love: much of fear is due to thwarted love. Loneliness and homesickness, from which religion is an escape, are forms of fear. The fears of sinners are in large part due to alienation from love. Love and fear frequently blend. The child has not ceased to love its parent even at the moment when it feels the impact of the parental slipper. The sinner loves and fears God.

The splitting of personalities is no longer regarded as a theologian's fiction, but has become a common-

place of medical practice: A double inner life is meant, one in which the individual worships God but serves the devil, and by so doing invites conflict, strain and distortion of character. Religion resolves such conflicts. With the love of God, or of Christ, comes unification of character and peace; the consciousness of sin disappears and the sinner becomes right and happy.

Other agencies besides religion may produce this effect: The exaltation of conversion is sometimes won by escape from religion to scientific rationalism. Complete devotion to an art or to a hygienic fad sometimes produces the same effect. The peace that passes understanding of religion, more deeply based than any other tranquillity, has this unique quality—that it can withstand storms which would break up every other sort of peace.

Revivalists are often accused of exciting their converts aimlessly, of arousing an ephemeral emotion which has no lasting influence upon life. This was not true of Wesley. He differed from all subsequent revivalists in the persistent and successful efforts he made to consolidate his gains and leave behind him a permanent organization. He never was content merely to preach. Preaching was preliminary to societies and classes. He would not speak anywhere, he said, where he could "not strike the second blow"; that is, follow up the first impression with organization. He was not creating a new religious sect, he

insisted, but an order, a fellowship. His societies and classes meeting in private houses and cementing their fellowship by peculiar practices—fasting, confession, love feasts, and watch nights—are reminiscent of the initiations of Masonic lodges and of the dances and rituals of savage fraternities. The class tickets ornamented with Scriptural texts and significant engravings which Wesley distributed to members of good standing and the ostentatiously simple dress of the women corresponded to the blazons, colors, ornaments, totems, and badges of exclusive secret societies. The injunction upon Methodists to prefer one another in trade and in marriage shows Wesley's clear understanding of the nature of the work he was doing and his readiness to make use of the most powerful of all cohesive motives.

The group spirit of the Methodists was immensely strengthened by Wesley's devices. No Methodist felt alone. The societies performed a unique service especially for the agricultural laborers who had migrated to the towns. The country boy or girl for the first time in the city found companionship in Methodist circles. Here were clubs to which the newly created factory hands could resort in their loneliness. The gratitude which many of them felt was well expressed in a letter of one Margaret Summibal to Wesley in 1740:

"We find great power from the Lord in our private band, the love of God shed abroad in our hearts,

our souls knit to one another; we drink of one spirit and the Lord doth meet us, and it is no wonder that we are loth to part for we think four hours too little time for so heavenly a Communion."

The Methodist felt that he belonged, that he was guided. He knew what was right, what was true, what was wrong and false. The great hurly-burly world became for him orderly and moral, and he had his favored place in it. The group spirit which Wesley awakened in the Methodists showed itself in social activities of various kinds. Methodists became active in workingmen's societies. The local preacher became also a labor leader. Good Methodists were good members of whatever community they found themselves in—good citizens and good patriots. An un-social, unaffiliated Methodist was a contradiction in terms.

Wesley himself had started out as an individualist—with the typical young man's point of view. His rationalization of his unwillingness to step into his father's shoes at Epworth is an illustration of his egoistic viewpoint. He could not be as holy at Epworth as at Oxford, he had argued. "Wherever I can be most holy myself there I can most promote holiness in others." He justified his going to Georgia on similar grounds—he went to save his own soul. The quest for holiness having proved futile, fear, nameless and irrational, weighed down his spirit, until he found release in the love of Jesus. But al-

though never repudiating this way of salvation, he felt a less acute need of it with the lapse of time. The reverence of the great fellowship he had founded swept back upon him and lifted him out of the isolation of his ego.

In his use of societies to expand Methodism, Wesley was employing the technique of all successful propagandists, political as well as religious. Societies were the engines of the Jacobins of the French Revolution, of the English Chartists, of the Correspondence Societies in the American Revolution, of the Abolitionists, the woman suffragists, and the prohibitionists. The method consists in infusing life into small organized groups which then expand like biological cells.

Another mode of propaganda used by Wesley for the first time in religious work was that of mass printing. It was he who discovered the cheap press. He sold to his followers at a small price not only religious tracts, sermons and hymns but also outlines of science, history, literature and grammar. From time to time he published his personal views on the political and social controversies of the times. He condensed and edited for the unschooled Methodists the learning of the world. His cheap books were the progenitors of that swarm of radical reprints which aim to make the workingman think by feeding him with the words of thinkers, particularly of such *enfants terribles* of science and philosophy as Hux-

ley, Spencer, Tyndall, Haeckel, Darwin, Ingersoll, Paine, Schopenhauer, Upton Sinclair, and others. Wesley reasoned like the latter radicals—that all enlightenment must inevitably lead readers to the same conclusions as his own.

In his preaching Wesley always reasoned. He did so with a certain quaint vanity: “I believe and reason too,” he wrote, “for I find no inconsistency between them.” His attitude was quite modern. The difference between man and man is not usually in their reasoning but in the beliefs with which they start out. Like most men, Wesley believed first and reasoned afterward. He prized his dialectical ability highly: “I would as soon put out my eyes to secure my faith as lay aside my reason,” he remarks. Had he not been a champion debater at the university! Skill in logic gave him a weapon, he explained, with which to repulse the criticism of his enemies, and he plunged into the fray when the battle called with an unholy joy in his undeniable competence.

Wesley’s conception of the secondary rôle reason plays in religion has evoked condescending apologies from systematic theologians, but he knew what he was doing. The peace of religion is indeed sometimes won through intellectual activity. Spinoza gained spiritual serenity in contemplating God as the Universal Substance and drawing corollaries from that conception. Spinoza’s exaltation was perhaps not inferior to that enjoyed by evangelical believers. The

"religion of science" is sometimes similarly efficacious. But scientific curiosity flags at last. The joy in mental athletics passes, and what alone can be relied upon to the end of life is that trust in a sustaining personal presence which it is the aim of a religion like Methodism by lifelong habit and suggestion to make instinctive. This personal devotion, faith, in the Wesleyan sense, often is transferred, it is true, to a word, a cross, a stone, a book, a building or a mere chip or shred of a saintly relic. For the mind pursues its own course and uses any device that serves its purpose. If one can be saved by clasping a piece of wood to his bosom he will do so. The reproaches of rationalism are as the idle wind, for he is not concerned at the moment with his mental rating. Each man must use the means at his command. Perhaps the same man will have recourse at one time to a book, a building, a set of words or a snatch of music, and at another time will rise by the highway of philosophy.

Wesley, as has been shown, appealed to the beliefs more or less dormant in his congregations, beliefs that had been planted in the land many generations back but were still existing under cover in the new race of factory hands. From the deep recesses of their souls there came responses to his vivid invocations of God, Christ, heaven, hell, the last judgment, resurrection, immortality, special Providence, witches, ghosts and omens. He did not pretend to derive his beliefs by chains of argument from other beliefs but relied

solely upon the word of God in the Bible supported by personal experience.

It may be asked how far did Wesley get in his logical demonstrations of the soundness of Methodism. It must first be asked: what would logical proof be like in the field in which Wesley worked? If only belief in God were compatible with health, happiness and success; if the love of Jesus did work that miracle of integration of character and that resolution of spiritual conflict ascribed to it by Wesley, those effects could be proved only by a pragmatic test. Such precisely was the line of demonstration Wesley pursued. He cited cases, had witnesses to testify, compiled statistics. That was reasoning, as Wesley insisted. The solid successes of the Methodists, their rise to wealth, power and respectability, their superior serenity and fortitude and their recuperative powers under misfortune and adversity certainly had a bearing upon the validity of Methodist principles. Wesleyanism stood this pragmatic test well!

As regards the authenticity of the Gospels, the historic truth of the Christian legend, Wesley did not inquire. He took it as an ultimate fact about which there could be no dispute. But more than that, there are clear intimations in his discussion of the subject that it made no difference to him whether historic truth was there or not. All the effects of faith on mind and body, on character and conduct, would

follow just the same whether Jesus was truly born in Bethlehem, preached and died on the cross or only lived in the minds of millions of worshipping Christians. The colossal reality of Jesus could not be wiped out even by the discovery of irrefutable evidence that no such person ever drew breath in Judea. Wesley used the Jesus legend for its present value. It gave him a terminology, a symbolism, which was the only possible key to the emotions of his hearers. It enabled him to state truths of moral psychology with unsurpassed effectiveness and to prescribe a prophylaxis far more generally applicable than that which emanates from scientific psychoanalysis. He used myth as well as crowd psychology with insight, yet with no touch of cynicism. Undoubtedly he knew the limitations of the human mind. He knew also the strength of the engines he employed—the instincts of fear, love and the group spirit. He had felt their effects in his own being. He used all the arts of persuasion and the technique of mob control—oratory, song, print and ritual—deliberately. So he became the leader of many thousands of happy mortals marching to eternity by the faith with which he inspired them.

THE END

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